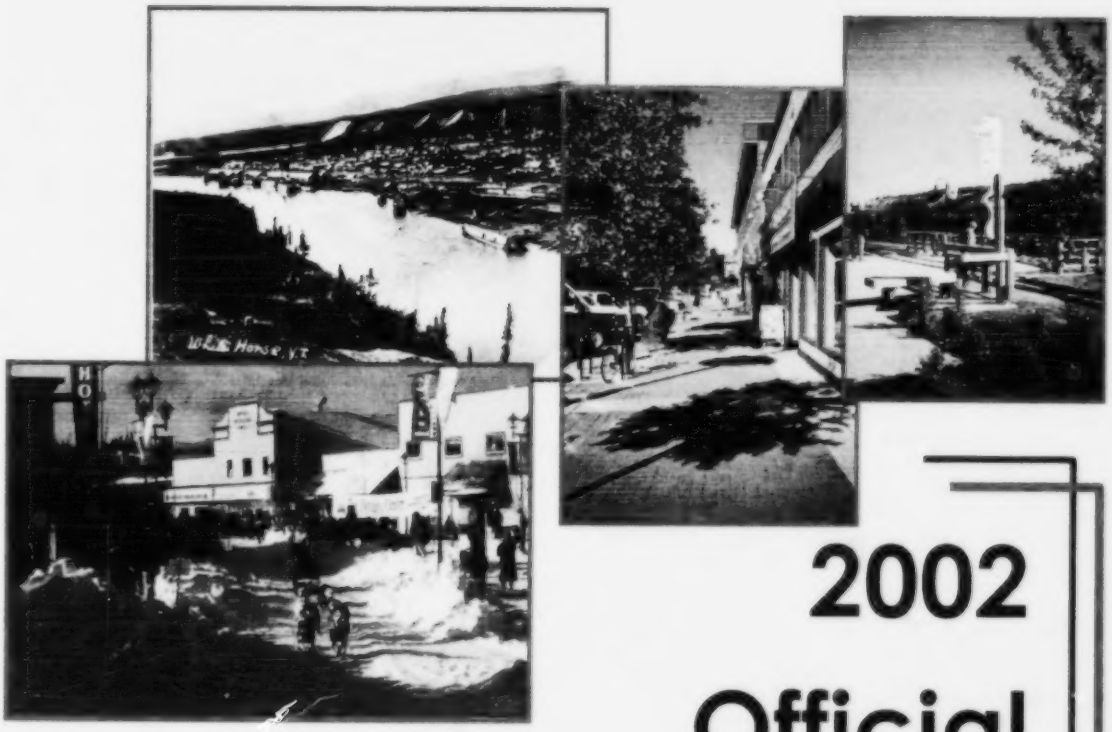
City of Whitehorse



2002 Official Community Plan

People's Plan: A Window to the Next Century

OCP Vision Statement

Whitehorse residents are proud of their city and its natural surroundings. Residents desire a vibrant, active and diverse community that provides a strong focal point and identity for the Yukon, reflective of its capital city status. Great importance is attached to the sustainability of the natural environment for future generations. Development should adhere to the following principles of sustainability:

1. **Management of Growth for the Long Term**

Consider the long-term impacts of all land use decisions. Build a community that works both for today and future generations. Ensure that short-term decisions do not compromise long-term intent. Make sure that services and amenities are close to home.

2. **Environmental Stewardship**

Grow in harmony with the natural surroundings and ecosystems. Preserve all important and unique natural features, including watercourses, landforms and habitats. Ensure that land use decisions retain environmental quality for future generations.

3. **Social Responsibility**

Ensure that all residents live in a safe community, and have access to affordable housing, educational opportunities, and recreational facilities. Recognize and support community diversity and consider the needs of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds.

4. **Maintain and Enhance the Quality of Life**

Focus on creating a high quality of life for residents, and consider the visual, social, environmental and community impacts of development. Encourage innovative and high quality designs, which enhance the unique character of Whitehorse. Reflect both the human and natural history of Whitehorse and its surrounding area in future land use decisions. Achieve a high standard of living reflective of the northern environment.

5. **Provision of Trails & Recreation**

Recognize the importance of trails for both motorized and non-motorized modes of travel. Provide for the expansion and enhancement of trails, and ensure that trails and park space are safe and accessible by all.

6. **Economic Diversity and Vitality**

Create a diverse, flexible and vibrant local economy that provides sustainable employment. Build a vital economy adaptable to future economic change. Maintain a strong sense of community by locating essential services and commercial opportunities downtown.

7. **Involve the Community**

Provide a process for involving residents on land use and community development decisions, which will build consensus on actions affecting the City's future.

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Part I

Background and Vision to a Plan

Chapter 1
Introduction

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is a tool used by local government to document the broad objectives and land use policies of a community. The intent of an OCP is to guide decisions in relation to policies for residential and commercial development, industrial activity, transportation infrastructure, and environmental considerations. Furthermore, the OCP outlines where future development should occur, including utility servicing, and overall considerations for implementation of the plan. Adoption of this Plan does not commit Council or any other agency to undertake any projects suggested in this document. Also, Land Claim agreements and settlements supersede policies from an OCP.

An OCP is a land use document that provides guidance for the physical layout of the City.

1.1 Purpose of an OCP

The purpose and content of an OCP is formally outlined in the Municipal Act, Statutes of the Yukon 1998, Chapter 19. Section 279 of the Municipal Act states:

> *"(1) An official community plan must address the future development and use of land in the municipality, the provision of municipal services and facilities, environmental matters within the municipality, the development of utility and transportation systems, and provisions for the regular review of the official community plan and zoning bylaw with each review to be held within a reasonable period of time.*
>
> *(2) an official community plan may address any other matter the council considers necessary."*

What's the difference between an OCP and a Zoning Bylaw?

While both are land use documents, an OCP is policy oriented whereas a Zoning Bylaw is regulatory in nature. In other words, an OCP provides an overall vision for the future of the City, and a Zoning Bylaw implements the vision of the OCP, by establishing detailed regulations for the use of a parcel of land.

Once an OCP is adopted as a bylaw, all future land use decisions made by Council must be consistent with the objectives and policies outlined in the Plan. An OCP, however, is not intended to be a static document, but should adapt to new trends within society and respond to changing circumstances. As such, following careful consideration by Council, policies and land use designations in the Plan may be revised by an amending bylaw pursuant to provisions outlined within the Municipal Act.

1.2 Organization of Document

The Official Community Plan consists of three main parts, which includes:

Table 1
OCP Contents

Title	Purpose
Part I: Background & Vision	• defines an OCP • outlines the planning process • sets out a 'vision' for the City
Part II: Growth Management Policies	• comprises the main policy section of the Plan • introduces and outlines various land use designations
Part III: Implementation	• considers the planning tools required to implement the policies of the Plan • summarizes future studies • outlines the use of regulatory bylaws and regulations

Many of the background sections and policies include illustrative maps and diagrams. These are intended to form explanatory guides and supplementary direction. The actual land use designations are included in Map 13 and 14, which can be found at the end of this document.

Yukon River, looking northwest

Chapter 2

The Community of Whitehorse

The City of Whitehorse is located along the Yukon River corridor in the South Central Yukon. It is surrounded by mountainous topography, including Haeckel Hill, Mount McIntyre, Golden Horn, and Grey Mountain. Whitehorse is a large municipality, some 41,600 hectares, extending approximately 30 kilometres north to south and 14 kilometres from east to west. The existing pattern of settlement is somewhat spread out, with each enclave surrounded by natural open space. Although the settlement pattern is not contiguous, it generally follows the alignment of the Alaska Highway from Cowley Creek and Mary Lake subdivision in the south to Hidden Valley and MacPherson subdivision in the north. The downtown, which is situated almost in the geographic centre of the municipality, acts as the nucleus due to its concentration of employment opportunities, retail and commerce, and its diverse mix of land uses and activities.

Approximately 70% of the Yukon population reside in Whitehorse.

2.1 History

Historically, First Nations used the Yukon River valley for food gathering and as a meeting place. Because they had a culture based on mobility, the First Nations of the Whitehorse area did not establish large villages with permanent structures. Instead, they used trails, and favourite fishing and camping spots on a seasonal basis. This activity went on for millennia and these traditional places used by the First Nation remain in the minds of the elders today.

The settlement of Whitehorse developed as a transportation hub during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898. Whitehorse was the head of navigable waters on the Yukon River and an important stop on the journey to the Klondike. Once the White Pass and Yukon Railway linked Whitehorse with the Alaskan port of Skagway, Whitehorse became the centre of transportation into and out of the Territory. During the Second World War, thousands of American Army personnel arrived to build the Alaska Highway. The boom in economic activity

ceased by the end of the war, but Whitehorse had established itself as an important centre of communications and transportation. In 1950, Whitehorse was incorporated as a City, and the Yukon Territorial Government moved the capital from Dawson City to Whitehorse three years later. Today, Whitehorse is a contemporary city and the government and business centre for the Yukon. Government activity provides considerable economic stability to the area, and tourism is becoming a major source of economic growth. Due to Whitehorse's rich history in mining and transportation, there are a number of historical sites in the area. They include copper mines, historic wood camps and fur farms, buildings, archaeological areas, cemeteries and burial sites.

Panorama view looking southwest from across the Yukon River, with sternwheelers, including the Yukoner, docked or on-shore. Circa 1903
Source: Yukon Archives

View looking north along Front Street showing the White Pass & Yukon Railway trains, station and post office. Circa 1920
Source: Yukon Archives

2.2 Growth Projections and Trends

During the first part of the 20th Century, the movement of people in and out of Whitehorse tended to be quite high. This was largely due to the Whitehorse economy reacting to fluctuations in the mining industry and highway construction. Over the past 50 years, the population stabilized as Whitehorse became the government and business centre for the Territory. Today,

population shifts do occur in response to mining and resource activity, but they are not as prominent.

According to the 1996 census, the population of Whitehorse was 19,157. This was up 6.9% from the 1991 census. However, there has been some indication that the Whitehorse population has been declining due to the fall in mineral prices and the subsequent closure of the Faro mine. The latest census (2001), which estimated the City's population to be 19,058, indicates that the population for the City of Whitehorse has declined by 0.5% since 1996.

Although the population has been declining, history has shown that the economy tends to be cyclical and will likely rebound. Mining prices may improve, and new economic generators such as a gas pipeline, new business opportunities, and/or expansion of the tourism industry will help to strengthen the economy over the medium to long term.

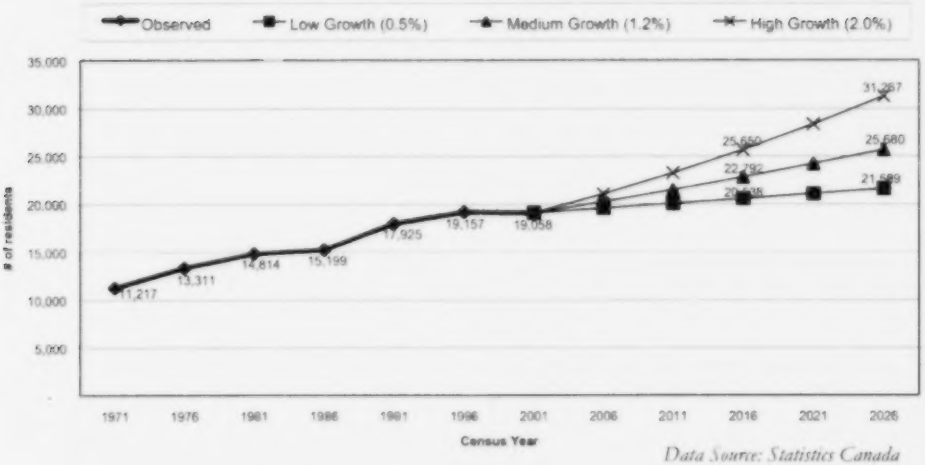
To gain some understanding of potential population growth, a high, medium, and low rate of growth has been calculated. This is based on historic growth rates between the 1971 and 2001 census. The results of the three growth rates are as follows:

Table 2
Rates of Growth

Growth Rate	Population Estimate		Net Growth
	2001	2026	
High (2.0% per year)	19,058	31,267	12,209
Medium (1.2% per year)	19,058	25,680	6,622
Low (0.5% per year)	19,058	21,589	2,531

Figure 1 displays the observed population of the City between 1971 and 2001, and indicates the high, medium and low estimate to the year 2026. Actual growth is difficult to predict and will fluctuate largely in response to economic conditions. Figure 1 provides a "what if" scenario reflecting different rate assumptions.

Figure 1
Observed and Projected Population Counts



Data Source: Statistics Canada
Projections: UMA

Population growth will have a direct impact on the number of housing units required. As of 2001, there were approximately 7,800 dwelling units within the city limits, with an average of 2.4 people per household. Between 1991 and 1999, building permit information indicated there was an average of 130 new homes constructed per year, which is consistent with the medium growth rate. Based on the high, medium, and low growth rate population predictions, the following housing predictions can be made:

Table 3
Housing Predictions

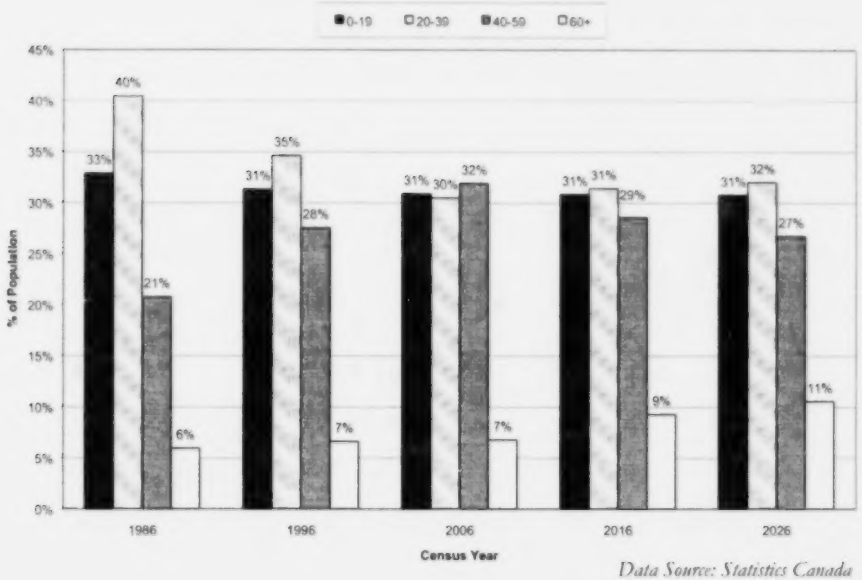
Growth Rate	25 Year Housing Projection	New Homes per Year (average)
High (2.0% per year)	5,000	200
Medium (1.2% per year)	2,700	100
Low (0.5% per year)	1,000	40

Projections: UMA

In addition to general growth trends, the increase or decrease of various age groups can be analyzed. As Figure 2 indicates, the 0-19 age group will likely stay the same at 31% of the total population whereas the 20-39 age group has declined in recent years, but will rebound slightly to represent 32% of the population in 2026. The 40-59 age group has been increasing significantly over the past 15 years, but will likely drop slightly to represent 27% of the total population in 25 years. The senior population, on the other hand, has been

much lower than the Canadian average of 16%. People who are 60 years of age or older, will increase, but will only represent about 11% of the total population by 2026.

Figure 2
Proportion of Population by Age Groups, 1986-2026



Data Source: Statistics Canada
Projections: UMA

2.3 Economic Overview

The City of Whitehorse is the government and service centre for the Yukon. As Table 4 indicates, 21% of the labour force is employed in government services, which is significantly higher than the Canadian average of 6%. Government activity provides considerable economic stability to the Whitehorse area. The Yukon Territorial Government, the Federal Government (including a number of departments and agencies), and the Council of First Nations all have their primary representation in the City. In addition, most major Yukon businesses, utility companies, and services operate out of Whitehorse. Other significant factors in the economy are retail and wholesale trade (15% of the total labour force), accommodation services (9%), construction (8%), education (7%), health and social services (9%), and business services (6%). Manufacturing, on the other hand, employs only 1% of the Whitehorse labour force compared to

14% for Canada as a whole. Whitehorse has a far lower proportion of people working in mining, forestry, fishing and trapping than the rest of the Yukon, but it has about the same proportion in agriculture. Whitehorse residents working in sectors such as mining and forestry are likely to provide services such as testing, rather than work in production.

Table 4
Percentage of Labour Force by Industry, Whitehorse and Canada

Industry	Whitehorse	Canada
Primary	3%	6%
Manufacturing	1%	14%
Construction	8%	6%
Transportation and storage	6%	4%
Communications and utilities	5%	3%
Wholesale and retail	15%	17%
Finance, insurance and real estate	4%	6%
Business service	6%	7%
Government service	21%	6%
Education service	7%	7%
Health and social services	9%	10%
Accommodation, food and beverage	9%	7%
Other service industries	7%	8%
Total	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996

Economic development in the Yukon has been closely linked to mining over the past century. The major metals produced by the mining industry in the Yukon include lead, gold, silver, copper and zinc. The Yukon mining industry also supports oil and gas wells, aggregate quarries, and mining related services. Mining is a volatile industry; and this has had implications on the Whitehorse economy since it is still a significant force. Many of the businesses that provide services to the mining industry are headquartered in Whitehorse. When the mining industry is experiencing a decline, the Whitehorse economy tends to suffer, with increased unemployment and some population loss.

The future of the mining industry in the Yukon will continue to be uncertain and will depend upon metal values, domestic and international demand, and the corporate decisions of mining companies. A considerable amount of time and money has been invested in infrastructure and exploration in the Yukon. This

should assist in attracting future mining activity to the Territory, and this will have an effect on Whitehorse's economy.

Tourism is growing in importance to the Whitehorse economy. The community benefits directly from visiting tourists, and through providing the transportation and business base for tourism activities elsewhere in the Yukon. The community's large and relatively stable population, together with the growth of tourism, has encouraged the development of other service industries.

2.4 The Social Environment

The people of Whitehorse are actively involved in their community through a variety of organizations and interest groups. A wide variety of recreational facilities, including ice arenas, outdoor skating rinks, a curling rink, a downhill ski facility, cinemas, golf courses, and a ski chalet and cross-country ski trails can be found in Whitehorse. There is also a squash club, several fitness clubs, biathlon/rifle and pistol ranges, and equestrian show grounds, in addition to a year-round swimming pool, soccer fields, tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, ball diamonds, and many parks and playgrounds. The Yukon River is popular with canoe and kayak enthusiasts whereas hiking and cycling trails link most parts of the city and offer access to surrounding wilderness areas.

The City's cultural facilities include the Yukon Arts Centre, which houses a modern theatre/concert hall and an art gallery. The Guild Hall is a smaller theatre combined with a dance studio. Yukon artists and craftspeople are featured in the Yukon Government Building's art collection, and at the Captain Martin House gallery, as well as in a number of local stores. The Yukon's history and pre-history are displayed in the MacBride Museum, the Yukon Transportation Museum, the Beringia Interpretive Centre, the SS Klondike National Historic Site, and at several other heritage sites (see Map 3).

Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre

2.5 Land Claims and Self-Government Process

The City of Whitehorse lies within the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dun and Ta'an Kwach'an First Nations. In 1993, the Council for First Nations and the Government of Yukon and Government of Canada negotiated the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA), which provides a framework for the negotiations on the individual First Nation Final Agreements. The Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation have negotiated a land claim Final Agreement and Self-Government Agreement with the Yukon and Canadian Government. This land claim settlement was ratified on January 13, 2002 and took effect on April 1, 2002. The Kwanlin Dun First Nation, on the other hand, has not yet publicly identified interim protected land within the city limits. The City of Whitehorse Official Community Plan will not prejudice the Final Agreement or Self-Government Agreement, and may have to be amended once land claims have been settled.

Under their Self-Government Agreements, First Nations will have the power to enact laws of a local or private nature on Settlement Land in relation to a number of matters as set out in their Self-Government Agreements. This includes planning, zoning and land development. Subject to the provisions of their Self-Government Agreements, First Nations may choose to enact their own law in respect of the planning, zoning and development of their Settlement Land. The Self-Government Agreement provides that when a First Nation enacts its own law in respect of planning, zoning and land development the Yukon law of general application, which deals with the same matter will cease to apply to Settlement Land.

Chapter 3
Creating a Vision for the City

A community plan is defined, to a large degree, by the community it serves. This focus is provided through examining the physical environment and planning goals, ultimately resulting in an appropriate policy document. Development of this Plan involved extensive consultation with municipal staff, City Council, First Nations, an advisory stakeholders group, special interest groups and residents of the community. This helped to produce a Vision Statement, which is found at the beginning of this document. The Vision Statement generated the overall framework for this Plan, and supplements Council's own Strategic Plan, which Council reviews periodically.

The seven main principles of the Vision Statement include:

1. Management of growth for the long term

2. Environmental stewardship

3. Social responsibility

4. Maintain and enhance the quality of life

5. Provision of trails and recreation

6. Economic diversity and vitality

7. Involve the community

3.1 The Planning Process

UMA Engineering Ltd., along with Gartner Lee, Applied Ecosystems Management, Mougeot Geoanalysis, and Charles McLaren Architecture, were retained by the City of Whitehorse to guide the planning process and prepare a new OCP for the entire city limits. Throughout the planning process, periodic meetings were held by the planning consultants with City staff, First Nation representatives, and City Council. A series of meetings were also held with an advisory stakeholders group, comprised of staff and representatives from various City departments, resource agencies, environmental groups, the business community, Yukon Government staff, and First Nations. In addition, some members of the advisory group represented neighbourhood interests. The purpose of the advisory group was to assist the planning team in the OCP review process.

At the beginning of the planning process, technical background information was collected and analyzed, and future trends were considered. The residents of Whitehorse were consulted extensively at the beginning of the planning process, and this included:

- April 19, 2000 – a Public Open House was held, which introduced the planning process and provided an opportunity for residents to outline their concerns;
- May 2000 – a series of Visioning Workshops were held that dealt with specific topics in order to refine the community's vision of itself. Topics included:
  - The Environment / Sustainable Communities
  - Economic Development / Tourism
  - Greenways / Blueways – Trails and Wildlife Areas / Corridors
  - Public Safety
  - Heritage
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Transportation
- May 2000 – visioning packages, which were sent out to various interest groups, individuals, and organizations, in order to broaden public participation.

One of several public open houses

This consultation along with the technical analysis resulted in the background report, "A Planning Foundation and Vision for the City of Whitehorse". The report summarized some of the past studies that have been commissioned by the City, and provided an analysis of Whitehorse's environmental features, demographic trends, and economic characteristics. The report also identified several prominent issues, and culminated in a draft Vision Statement. The background report and Vision Statement were the main focus at a Public Open House on June 7, 2000.

Some of the issues identified in the background report included:

- attract more industry, especially hi-tech
- promote year-round tourism, not seasonal
- beautify the downtown
- promote biking and walking as alternative modes of transportation
- consider winter design guidelines
- orient buildings in order to take advantage of natural sunlight
- protect sensitive wildlife habitats
- preserve Grey Mountain and the surrounding lakes

- preserve heritage buildings, especially along Wood Street
- enhance and extend trail linkages
- separate mechanized and non-mechanized recreation trails
- need a cultural district; promote the arts community
- encourage more public participation in all areas
- protect the community from forest fires
- discourage extensive highway and country residential development
- concentrate services in the downtown

The background report was presented to City Council in the fall of 2000. Research then commenced on the preparation of land use options used to formulate policies in the new Plan. In early 2001, a workshop was conducted with the advisory stakeholders group in order to prepare a series of land use options, which culminated in the report "Towards a New Plan: Land Use Options for the City of Whitehorse".

This report was presented to the community at an open house and presentation on March 27, 2001. The purpose of the land use options was to stimulate discussion regarding the future of Whitehorse and its physical layout. Each land use option created a land use pattern or scenario, and aimed to accommodate up to 7,800 new residents, or 3,000 new dwelling units, by the year 2026. Option A considered a concentrated development pattern, Option B outlined a more suburban development pattern whereas Option C described a highly dispersed development pattern. Residents were asked to provide feedback on the three land use options through an informal questionnaire/comment sheet. Approximately 78% of the respondents indicated they preferred a concentrated development pattern as outlined in Option A.

Work commenced on the draft of the new Whitehorse OCP during the spring and summer of 2001, with periodic reviews with staff and City Council. The first public draft was presented at an open house on September 26, 2001. Residents were asked to comment on the proposed policy initiatives and land use designations. Following the open house, City staff met with several neighbourhood organizations in order to obtain additional comments. As well, the planning team conducted workshops with City Council in order to fine tune some of the policy initiatives during subsequent drafts. This resulted in a new draft which was reviewed at a public open house on February 5, 2002.

3.2 Implementing the Vision

The OCP Vision Statement and Council Strategic Plan provide direction for the future of the City

The OCP Vision Statement and its seven guiding principles, which can be found at the beginning of this document, structure the Plan's policies. Each policy chapter aims to be consistent with the Vision Statement, and Council will use the guiding principles as a checklist for future land use and potential OCP amendment decisions. For ease of reference, all policies have been printed in a **special type** face. These policies represent City Council policies, and may only be changed through an Official Community Plan amendment, pursuant to the Municipal Act.

This OCP establishes a broad strategic framework for the physical shape of the city. As part of this Plan, the City of Whitehorse has been divided into several land use designations, as defined in various maps. Several policies refer to the land use designations in the Plan. However, it is important to point out that the OCP is not a zoning bylaw. Land use designations are used to provide a guide to the type of activities that would be permitted in such a location. Zoning is used to establish a more detailed regulatory framework that can include building height, setbacks, and parking standards. The land use designations in this Plan, along with a brief description, are listed in Table 5 below:

Table 5
Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation	Purpose of Designation
Natural Open Space	To restrict intensive development and to minimize detrimental impacts on land and water in these areas.
Environmental Protection	To protect environmentally significant areas and important wildlife corridors.
Greenbelt	To protect areas of recreational significance, wildlife habitat and provide a contiguous greenbelt.
Outdoor Recreation	To allow outdoor recreation activities, which utilize the physical environment for commercial or non-profit purposes.
Residential – Country	To permit larger residential lots that do not rely on municipal water and sewer services. Subject to proper zoning, schools, parks, churches and community halls may be permitted.
Residential – Urban	To permit fully serviced residential lots that are close to the downtown core, or represent principal residential neighbourhoods. This includes both single-family and multi-family dwellings. Subject to proper zoning, schools, parks, churches and community halls may be permitted.
Residential – Downtown	To preserve the unique housing character of downtown neighbourhoods.
Mixed Use – Residential/ Commercial	To allow a mix of multi-family residential and commercial based activities in an urban environment.
Mixed Use – Riverfront	To encourage a mix of multi-family residential, commercial, institutional and park activities compatible with the Yukon River waterfront.

Land Use Designation	Purpose of Designation
Commercial – Downtown	To encourage commercial activities that are primarily pedestrian oriented in a highly urban environment.
Commercial – Service	To allow commercial activities that are primarily automobile oriented.
Mixed Use – Commercial/Industrial	To encourage a mix of service commercial and service industrial activities.
Industrial – Service	To permit industrial activities that provides industrial services, light manufacturing, warehousing, and storage.
Industrial – Major	To allow intensive resource extraction and larger processing manufacturing activities located away from residential areas.
Natural Resource	To allow resource extraction and related activities away from existing and future residential neighbourhoods.
Agriculture Limited	To accommodate non-soil based agricultural land uses and to permit a broad range of complementary activities.
Public Service	To provide for major public and semi-public uses such as airport facilities, major indoor recreational facilities, educational institutions and correctional facilities.
Pubic Utilities	To provide for major public utilities such as landfills, sewage lagoons and water reservoirs.

3.3 Planning Structure for the City

The Official Community Plan provides a broad policy framework for future land use decisions, and is strongly influenced by the Vision Statement. In order to lend shape to the future of the city, the Plan recognizes current development patterns but proposes a clearer definition to long-term growth areas in order to preserve a greater proportion of natural space. Many sections of the city are well defined, and include extensive open space, primarily as buffers between residential communities. In the past, there has been pressure for more country residential use, however this form of development also consumes a significantly larger proportion of land (on a per capita basis) than more urban areas. This OCP proposes preservation of country residential development as a housing option in already identified areas, but the creation of new country residential areas will proceed cautiously. Thus development phasing and a greater emphasis on maximizing use of existing areas represents an important driver to the planning structure of the city in the coming years. Continued development of already defined urban areas, as well as urban expansion into Lower Porter Creek and Beyond Copper Ridge, will readily accommodate the projected growth for the city, which at a maximum (assuming economic expansion) is expected to require about 5,000 housing units over 20 to 25 years.

Part II

Growth Management Policies

Chapter 4

The Natural Environment

Whitehorse is blessed with a beautiful natural environment, which is a significant reason why many residents have chosen to live in the Yukon capital. The Yukon River corridor and floodplain, along with the surrounding mountain ranges, provide a diverse landscape for both wildlife and humans. In addition, there are many streams that flow into the Yukon River and several mountain lakes throughout the region. This provides ample opportunity for outdoor recreation and wildlife viewing.

OCP Vision
Grow in harmony with the natural surroundings and ecosystems. Preserve all important and unique natural features, including watercourses, landforms and habitats. Ensure that land use decisions retain environmental quality for future generations.

4.1 Natural Areas and Steep Slopes

The majority of development in Whitehorse is confined to the Yukon River and/or the Alaska Highway corridor and is bounded by mountain ranges on the east and west sides of the river corridor. In addition to steep slopes, environmentally sensitive areas and significant wildlife corridors have been identified and this Plan generally does not consider these lands to be appropriate for development. Map 1 indicates areas that have significant physical constraints and identifies the location of important wildlife corridors and environmentally sensitive areas. The following policies aim to control development in unsuitable areas.

Long Lake, looking southeast

Policies

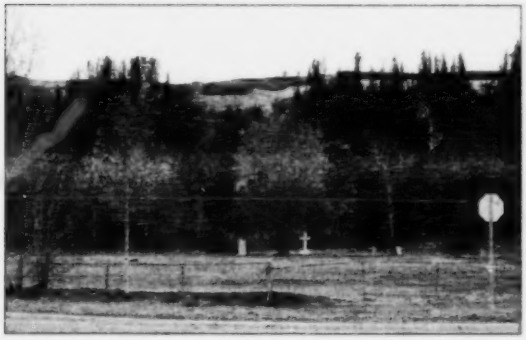
Council Strategic Plan

"We envision Whitehorse as a year round community working in concert with the environment."

1. Future community development shall be directed away from lands that have unstable slopes, poor soil permeability, high water tables and ground water seepage, flooding susceptibility, bedrock, critical wildlife habitat, or areas with significant flora and fauna.
2. Due to the safety hazards associated with steep slopes, building, grading and tree harvesting shall be discouraged on slopes exceeding 30%. A professional geotechnical assessment may be required for all construction on slopes between 20% to 30%.
3. New development near escarpments that have a slope in excess of 30% shall be set back at a site-specific distance. In no case shall new development be less than 15 metres from the top or the toe of the slope in order to reduce the impact of erosion and slumping. The only exception is for trails and view points.
4. In examining interpretive opportunities, development shall be directed to locations that are most able to tolerate potential disturbance. Any trail or associated development shall be designed to avoid areas of erodable and unstable soils.
5. The clay cliffs in the immediate area of the Yukon River shall be considered environmentally sensitive, and other than carefully planned trails, shall be kept free from development.
6. In order to reduce the potential impacts of flooding, minimum setbacks may be established on a case-by-case basis, for new and accessory buildings within areas which may be subject to flooding.

7. Sources of ground water and air pollution shall be controlled and mitigated by authorities having the appropriate jurisdiction, and methods of control may include appropriate regulation and public education.

8. Aquifer recharge areas may be identified as part of an overall plan to protect ground water sources and prevent potentially harmful development.



Downtown escarpment behind Pioneer Cemetery

4.2 Natural Open Space Designation

The Natural Open Space designation identifies areas within the City that require further study, are subject to geological hazards or are environmentally sensitive. Many of these areas have limited access and are isolated from community services. Outdoor recreation trails permeate throughout this designation, in addition to some areas that are used for domestic fuel woodcutting. Most of land within the Natural Open Space designation is Commissioner's Land. In some cases, the Yukon Government may wish to develop portions of land within this designation that is within the Territorial interest. An example of this is the proposed development of the Foothill's pipeline.

The purpose of this designation is to restrict intensive development and to minimize detrimental impacts on land and water in these areas. Natural Open Space areas are inappropriate for concentrated development; however, they may be suitable for outdoor recreation uses such as trail development, or domestic fuel woodcutting in areas that are managed by the Department of the Environment (formally the Department of Renewable Resources), Yukon Government.

Policies

1. Land designated as Natural Open Space may be used for managed domestic fuel woodcutting, trail access, public utilities, and public utility corridors. In addition, temporary construction camps for public utilities may be considered, subject to all pertinent regulations and bylaws.
2. Where areas of high mineralization underlie land designated as Natural Open Space, uses related to mineral exploration and extraction may be permitted subject to other regulatory requirements (Environmental Assessment Legislation, Yukon Water Act, etc.).
3. It is recognized that a number of large country residential lots exist within the Natural Open Space designation, including lots in the McLean Lake area, Forestview, and Long Lake. These uses, and any other previously approved uses in this designation, may continue and be recognized through appropriate zoning.
4. If future studies, land claims or significant economic initiatives suggest that an area with a Natural Open Space designation can accommodate a broader range of uses with safe access and without environmental damage, the area may be re-designated through Plan amendment.

4.3 Wildlife and Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Whitehorse is at the centre of the Yukon Southern Lakes ecoregion, one of 23 natural regions identified in the territory.

Whitehorse is known for its wildlife diversity, which includes caribou, wolves, deer, moose, black and grizzly bear, and a variety of aquatic and avian species. In 1999, the City commissioned a study to identify wildlife habitats within the City and to provide a rating of ecological sensitivity. This resulted in a series of maps and the document entitled "Defining Ecologically Based Significant Wildlife Areas for the City of Whitehorse". Map 1 indicates the location of significant wildlife corridors and areas that were identified in the study. These areas are considered inappropriate for development except for trail access. Most significant wildlife corridors follow the natural paths of watercourses such as the Yukon River, McIntyre Creek, Croucher Creek, Marwell Wetlands, Wolf Creek, McLean Lake, Cowley Creek, Chadburn Lake, Chadden Lake and Hidden Lakes. These corridors are indicated on Maps 13 and 14 and are designated as Environmental Protection. Generally, a minimum 30-metre setback from the high water mark is required along these watercourses.

The Environmental Protection designation largely reflects the 30-metre riparian setback for all year-round rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands. It includes areas that are environmentally sensitive and areas that have not been significantly disturbed by human activity. These corridors need to be protected from future

development in order to protect the biodiversity of waterways and wildlife corridors. However, it is also recognized that areas within the Environmental Protection designation can provide important educational and interpretive opportunities. Carefully managed access trails may be considered in the Environmental Protection designation for wildlife viewing.

It is important to note that some wildlife tends to migrate to higher elevation areas and it is essential to protect the connectivity of the upland with lower lying watercourses. The Natural Open Space and Parks and Recreation designation add to the protection of wildlife habitat in lowland and upland areas.

Policies

1. Significant wildlife corridors and important water bodies and land areas shall be protected from incompatible development that would negatively impact the ecology of those areas. This may include the clearing of land, tree harvesting, and the use of motorized recreation vehicles.
2. A 30-metre riparian setback along both sides of all rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands, year-round or seasonal, shall be protected from development, except for access and non-motorized viewing trails or as otherwise noted. Where steep banks contain the riparian area, the setback shall be applied from the top of bank. These riparian areas shall be retained in a natural condition.
3. This riparian setback is reflected in the Environmental Protection designation. Land designated as Environmental Protection shall be protected from future development, except for trail access and public utility corridors. Any viewing or interpretive areas or improvement should be developed in a manner, which does not encroach on environmentally sensitive habitat. The use of motorized recreation vehicles and boat launches are discouraged within this designation.
4. Within the downtown area and the western shore of Schwatka Lake, this riparian setback may be relaxed to accommodate heritage and tourism uses once plans are approved.
5. The 30-metre riparian setback may be increased for areas identified in conservation studies as having high capability for wildlife habitat.
6. Any already established home sites, and other previously approved uses in this riparian setback may continue. However, any significant expansion of these non-conforming uses shall not be encouraged.
7. Rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands that have been degraded in the past shall be cleaned up, contingent upon available resources. The City, residents, and environmental organizations shall be encouraged to work with the appropriate jurisdictions and obtain the necessary approvals.

8. Suitable wildlife viewing areas are permitted at strategic locations with an emphasis on wildlife study and interpretation. Such interpretive areas should be adequately signed and low key and not interfere with sensitive natural areas. Where wetland interpretive areas are considered, viewing areas shall be constructed in such a way as to minimize human impact on wetland habitat and wildlife.

9. Several parcels of privately titled land are situated within areas of important wildlife habitat. Landowners are encouraged to collaborate with environmental departments and agencies at the City, Territorial and Federal levels to ensure that wildlife values can be protected by retaining natural tree cover where feasible and by eliminating fencing if practical where such fencing impedes natural wildlife corridors.

10. Watercourse alterations or crossings for trails shall not be permitted without an environmental assessment and applicable regulatory approvals.

4.4 The Yukon River Corridor

The most significant wildlife corridor in Whitehorse is the Yukon River and its shoreline. It has great importance to the people who reside in the area as almost 40% of city residents live within 2 kilometres of the river. The human history of the Yukon River corridor shows areas of past fishing camps, berry picking and hunting trails. It is clear that the traditional use of the Yukon River corridor by people is linked to the natural history of this area. After the gold rush parts of the Yukon River were subject to significant human modification, including the construction of a hydroelectric dam that created Schwatka Lake. Today, the Yukon River is used for motorized boating, canoeing, rafting kayaking, scuba diving and swimming whereas the shoreline is used for hiking, biking, horseback riding, all terrain vehicle touring, cross country skiing and snowmobiling. In addition, there are a number of historic or interpretive sites along the river corridor.

The City of Whitehorse initiated a major land use planning project for the Yukon River corridor in 1998. The overall objective was to provide a framework to guide future development activities within the municipal boundaries of the Yukon River corridor. This resulted in the Yukon River Corridor Plan, which was adopted by Council in December 1999. Some of the policies of the Corridor Plan have been included in this section while others are incorporated into more appropriate sections of the OCP. Although some of the Corridor Plan policies have been paraphrased, or combined to eliminate duplication, they are considered to be consistent between the two plans. In the event of any discrepancy between the two, the policies in the OCP prevail.

Looking north along the Yukon River

Policies

1. Any new development within 100 metres of the Yukon River or any other stream/wetland shall be subject to site-specific examination, with special consideration to desirable setbacks. This applies to all lands along the Yukon River Corridor where new land uses are considered.
2. The Kishwoot Islands area may continue as a passive habitat interpretive location, and development within this area is encouraged to be kept to a minimum in order to preserve the natural character of these islands.
3. Provision for new boat launch sites, supplementing proposed downtown riverfront sites, may be considered for the American Laundry site, the confluence of the Yukon and Takhini River, and as part of any development that may occur on the east bank of the river north of the Kishwoot Island area.
4. New and existing day use areas and associated boat tie ups shall have a small footprint and are to be designed to reflect the surrounding natural setting. Development of these sites shall be constructed out of natural materials, which reflect and complement the natural surroundings. Trail networks may connect these areas, which includes:
    a. existing day use areas;
    b. day use/picnic area with boat tie up at Kishwoot Islands near the downtown riverfront; and
    c. day use areas along the trail to provide for water access or picnicking along the trail.
5. The area of the Yukon River between Robert Service Way and Riverdale is suitable for canoe and kayak use. Training courses and competitions may be held within this area. A staging area for river access by these boaters should be maintained.
6. The Miles Canyon area exhibits some outstanding lava bed features, which should be incorporated into interpretive displays dealing with the natural and human history of the area. Trails in Miles Canyon are recommended for upgrading with surface stabilization and guardrails. Lookout points are encouraged, ideally integrated with interpretive signage.

7. Consideration shall be given to development of interpretive programming, either independently through City resources, or in partnership with First Nations as a means of interpreting the natural heritage resources of the Yukon River corridor region. In some cases, interpretive opportunities may be combined with natural view sites to enhance the opportunity of experiencing major features of the Yukon River corridor. Some of the interpretive opportunities that may be recognized in future land use planning, include:

    a. Marwell flats, interpretive signage reflecting Canol Refinery site and Kwanlin Dun interests;

    b. natural features at Big Bend, McIntyre Creek and Croucher Creek;

    c. the Whitehorse Rapids Generating Station and fishway; and

    d. the downtown riverfront walkway.

4.5 Wildfire Protection

Wildfires are common in the Whitehorse region and are a controlling factor of both the distribution and the age of the surrounding forest. They are also a significant threat to the community. Natural and human-made vegetation clearings, in addition to utility and transportation corridors, tend to provide a fuel discontinuity for fire. However, the most effective wildfire risk reduction strategy is for property owners and tenants to ensure their homes and other structures have defensible space to FireSmart standards. The FireSmart community initiative is an ongoing commitment between Yukon residents and the various levels of government to work together towards a safer environment. This initiative produced the FireSmart standards handbook "FireSmart – Protecting Your Community From Wildfire", which illustrates potential wildfire behaviour differences that can be achieved through fuel modification techniques, thus reducing the risk of uncontrollable wildfires.

Utilize FireSmart standards to protect from wildfires

Policies

1. All buildings and structures, including campgrounds, shall have setbacks, to be determined through zoning, from adjacent forested areas and meet defensible space FireSmart Standards. Responsibility for site-specific implementation of FireSmart principles shall be the responsibility of the landowner.

2. Careful attention shall be given to the clearing of underbrush in order to minimize the danger of wildfire. For future development, care must be taken to create and maintain natural fireguards to minimize the danger of wildfires.

3. The City shall work with Territorial and Federal authorities to maintain awareness of wildfire hazards, and where feasible, aid local residents in clearing areas that are susceptible to a wildfire.

4. All new major development and/or subdivision proposals should include a fire management plan that addresses fuel discontinuity and is subject to the approval of the Fire Chief. A fire management plan shall also address such primary fire protection issues as access for fire fighting crews and equipment and alternate egress routes for residential evacuation. Such a fire management plan shall link to the broader City of Whitehorse Emergency Plan and shall be prepared by the land owner or developer.

4.6 Schwatka Lake

Schwatka Lake, which is located south of the downtown and east of Robert Service Way, is a multi-use water body created by a hydro-electric dam. The lake plays a key role in power generation, wildlife habitat, potable water supply, air transportation, tourism and community recreation. There are several issues surrounding the compatibility of multiple land and water uses. As a result, the City commissioned a study to make recommendations with respect to all current activities utilizing Schwatka Lake and provide an approach to resolve the related land and water use issues. This resulted in the Schwatka Lake Aviation and Land Use Study (1995). This study concluded that many of the issues could be resolved through inter-agency cooperation and clarifying the land use administration process.

Policies

1. Schwatka Lake is a multi-use lake that is used for recreational purposes, and floatplane activity. It is also the City's drinking water reservoir, and this shall be protected. These uses are not always compatible, and may require a detailed management plan in order to ensure the safety of users, and the protection of the water quality. This management plan shall be the responsibility of the City of Whitehorse.

2. Schwatka Lake is the primary base for floatplane activity. Dock owners are encouraged to consolidate into a single activity node for floatplanes on the west side of the Lake. This may include a marina, and a docking facility for pleasure boats. Existing docks may be replaced, but new docking facilities are to be prohibited.

3. Consideration shall be given to improved operating procedures to ensure that the Schwatka Lake float plane base is maintained in a way to avoid fuel spills, given its location above the water intake. This may involve float plane operators, property owners and the City to collaborate and add protective measures to an overall management plan.

4. A feasibility study may be considered in relocating all floatplane operations from Schwatka Lake to a location along the Yukon River, near Cousins Aerodrome, or another location. The exact location would depend upon road access to the facility, physical site constraints, and any environmental impacts.

Schwatka Lake, with Golden Horn Mountain in the background

4.7 Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability relates to the maintenance of clean air, water, soil, and wildlife habitats through practices that minimize damage to the natural environment in order to ensure the long-term integrity of the ecosystem. It also relates to human processes such as urban sprawl, which affects the natural and human environment in many ways. A dispersed settlement pattern is typically more expensive to service. It impacts and reduces the amount of environmentally sensitive lands, and generally leads to an increased dependence on the automobile, higher rates of air pollution, and in some cases, a weakening of the downtown. At a more local level, environmental stewardship encourages residents to take a more active role in protecting and preserving the environment.

Residents expressed concern that environmental strains are placed on Whitehorse due to urban sprawl along the Alaska Highway and the proliferation of country residential lots. This has resulted in the loss of wildlife corridors and environmentally sensitive areas, since natural open space is increasingly more fragmented. Due to this dispersed land use pattern, many residents must rely on the automobile. There is an interest in promotion of alternative forms of transportation such as transit, biking and walking. Since land use and transportation planning are closely linked, alternatives to the automobile are best facilitated through a more compact and contiguous urban and rural form.

Increased automobile dependency, in addition to other sources of greenhouse gases, has led to concerns about how this will affect the global and local climate in the long term. The potential changes associated with climate change are shifting patterns in temperature, precipitation, disease vectors and water availability. This could affect the stability of the escarpment, the Yukon River embankment, siltation of the water supply, and the capacity of storm sewers. The City and its residents are in a position to make a change in order to mitigate any negative effects of climate change. This not only includes pursuing alternative modes of transportation for a cleaner environment, but other strategies, such as considering alternative forms of energy supply including wind, solar, and geothermal power.

Policies

1. Future development shall be directed in as compact a manner as feasible given already established land use patterns. This includes redevelopment and infill development in the downtown along with limited residential infill in Porter Creek and Riverdale.
2. New development should occur in a sequential manner based on available municipal services and financial considerations and be phased in over time as outlined in Map 12. The City and the development community will determine the actual sequence.
3. Developers for new residential development are encouraged to consider lot layouts and site planning to maximize solar exposure and housing designs that are energy efficient.
4. In order to minimize vehicular trips, and to provide shopping opportunities closer to residential areas, a mix of residential and commercial development shall be encouraged in the downtown. In addition, neighbourhood commercial development shall be encouraged to continue in already established neighbourhoods and to locate in future residential neighbourhoods such as Beyond Copper Ridge and Lower Porter Creek.
5. The City may consider educating property owners to retrofit existing buildings with sustainable energy alternatives and conservation measures through educational programs.
6. Where practical, the City may consider pursuing natural energy alternatives for new development. This may be accomplished through educational programs. Examples of natural energy alternatives include the implementation of wind, solar and geothermal power.

7. In order to ensure good air quality in the Whitehorse area, the use of modern pollution control technology and the implementation of additional emission reduction and management strategies shall be actively pursued.

See Section 11.1 (Transportation) for more policies on alternative modes of transportation.

8. As funding and resources allow, the City shall coordinate with Territorial and Federal authorities in order to cleanup contaminated sites.

9. The City may, in reviewing its road and servicing standards, consider potential development standards that are environmentally appropriate, economically efficient and effective from a maintenance perspective.

Map 1 – Physical Constraints and Wildlife Areas

Chapter 5
Parks and Recreation

Park and recreational opportunities are highly valued by residents of Whitehorse. An elaborate trail network has been developed over the years, which connects a number of residential areas, and provides for hikes of several hours duration, with opportunities to view a diversity of wildlife. In addition, the city boasts a number of outdoor and indoor recreational facilities.

OCP Vision

Recognize the importance of trails for both motorized and non-motorized modes of travel. Provide for the expansion and enhancement of trails, and ensure that trails and park space are safe and accessible by all.

5.1 Trail and Greenway Corridors

The protection of well-used trails is essential to the quality of life for many residents. In addition, designating trails for specific uses, trail mapping, and appropriate signage aids in the safety of trail users. Map 2 indicates the general location of the Trans-Canada trail, major collector trails, and areas of intensive local trail usage. A Trail Plan (1997) was prepared for the City in order to develop a strategy to improve the existing trail system and to introduce trail system design. This was followed by the Whitehorse Trail Map (1999), which provides a more detailed and accurate description of existing trails.

Policies

1. Proposed trails shall require detailed planning and be developed in recognition of land use, topographic and soil constraints. Any trail shall be designed to avoid areas of erodable and unstable soils.
2. The City may, in conjunction with other agencies and governmental departments, develop a trail signage program, which encourages trail use, and facilitates visitor appreciation of the City's natural, cultural, and historic attributes.
3. Where feasible, consideration shall be made to separate trails for motorized recreation and for non-motorized recreation.
4. Trail enhancement in areas of environmental sensitivity shall be limited to upper areas, which may include lookout platforms that minimize stream bank damage.
5. The former Hepburn Tramway Line shall be designated primarily for horse riding use.

Council Strategic Plan

"All our citizens enjoy access to ample green spaces, accessible trails, year round active living opportunities and cultural events."

6. A major greenway consisting of wildlife areas and trails is suggested for the corridor east of the Yukon River. The greenway will largely follow existing access roads and trails and may be developed to allow a continuous link in the City between the south and north boundary, thus integrating wildlife and recreation features within the overall Yukon River corridor. The greenway shall maintain a width of about 300 metres, and development shall be limited to trails only.

Trails have laced the Yukon River valley ever since First Nations people began making their seasonal rounds in the Whitehorse area.

7. Further consideration should be given for the Yukon River corridor greenway to accommodate appropriate protection of the surrounding ecosystem, a consistent trail standard, trail usage guidelines and wildlife protection.

8. The greenway corridor shall be linked to established neighbourhoods and access sites, such as the Riverdale neighbourhood, the Chadden Lake and Chadburn Lake recreation areas, and the Long Lake access route.

9. The bridge link across Miles Canyon is to be utilized as a means of encouraging more loop trail development for the use of visitors and tourists. These loops provide for trips of various lengths and allow for potential theme interpretive trails, which may highlight the natural history, heritage features, scenic spots, or other attributes. To complement the potential for a loop trail system, connections may be provided around the dam site through the use of a pedestrian bridge.

Riverfront Trail

10. Where viewpoints are developed, they should be located at sites with connecting trails, and in areas not sensitive to human disturbance. These areas may also comprise trail staging areas supplemented with appropriate trail signage. Where viewpoints are established in wetlands, such viewpoints should be constructed on elevated structures, which limit physical intrusion into the wetland area (e.g. through the use of viewing towers or decks). Structures must take into consideration seasonal water fluctuations, water velocity and ice build up. Picnic benches, and interpretive signage could be provided.

11. Every effort shall be made to maintain or enhance current recreational trails in the Whitehorse area. Blocking of established trails is to be avoided, and a contiguous trail system that links neighbourhoods and activity areas together shall receive priority. Any new development shall be reviewed in relation to trail continuity and access to recreation areas. Where appropriate, green belt buffers shall be integrated to protect wildlife corridors or to protect important landscape features. In some cases, existing trails may need to be relocated to allow new development to take place. This shall be the responsibility of the developer.

12. A public planning process may be initiated in order to help resolve conflicts between recreational uses. This process shall be fair in addressing the conflicts. For example, a conflict between motorized and non-motorized use may occur and the outcome may be the designation of areas, which allow for the two uses in separate areas or at different times of the day or year. To facilitate this process, the following aspects shall be considered:

a. the environmental sensitivity of the area under consideration, including the impact of proposed uses;

b. linkages to trails in adjacent areas;

c. minimization of noise from motorized trails; and

d. the separation of motorized and non-motorized trail uses.

5.2 Greenbelt Designation

The purpose of the Greenbelt designation is to protect areas of recreational significance, wildlife habitat and provide a contiguous greenbelt in Whitehorse. This shall be used to augment significant wildlife corridors and environmentally sensitive areas. In addition, trail corridors and park development such as cabins, warming huts, interpretive signage, and picnic sites may be considered in appropriate locations. However, land clearing, manicured parks and sport fields are not encouraged within this designation.

Policies

1. Land designated as Greenbelt shall be largely oriented to the maintenance of natural park areas and the protection of scenic sites. Uses may include outdoor recreation uses, trail activity, interpretive signage, playgrounds, cabins, warming huts, picnic sites, public utilities and utility corridors. Land clearing, manicured parks and sport fields are not encouraged within this designation.

2. The downtown escarpment shall be limited to parks and trails only in selected locations. Any new development in this area shall consider geotechnical factors, slope stability and pedestrian safety.

3. Land designated as Greenbelt along the Yukon River corridor are intended to support an extensive trail network with the following considerations:

    a. where possible the use of the existing trail network shall be encouraged;

    b. a variety of trails shall be provided, ranging from rustic trails, which provide access to the more remote areas, to well developed trails along the more popular sections with viewing areas, day use areas, and access points to the riverfront; the level of use would reflect the type of trail; and

    c. the more popular, high volume trails shall be well marked and trail signage developed to allow for a safe and enjoyable hike for all user levels.

5.3 Park Reserve

Chadburn Lake Park was established as a Park Reserve by Commissioner's Order in 1970, which recognized the need to preserve an area for recreation in close proximity to Whitehorse and to protect the region's water supply from incompatible development. The Chadburn Lake Park Reserve, which runs along the Yukon River south of the downtown is bound by the Alaska Highway to the west and Grey Mountain to the east. It includes several lakes such as Chadburn, Schwatka, Ear and the two Hidden Lakes. The recreational facilities that are located in the Park Reserve include cabins and warming huts, hiking and skiing trails, picnic sites, Miles Canyon footbridge and interpretive signs, and the Grey Mountain Road viewpoint.

During the planning process, it has been suggested that Grey Mountain should be added to the Chadburn Lake Park Reserve due to its numerous recreational opportunities, viewpoints, diverse wildlife, and natural beauty. This will complement existing recreational areas, and require an Order in Council by the Territorial Government. It will ensure that the Grey Mountain area is preserved for recreational activity since the majority of land is Commissioner's Land.

Chadburn Lake with Grey Mountain in the background

Policies

1. The current Chadburn Lake Park Reserve area is encouraged to be extended from Schwatka Lake to the southern and eastern boundary of the City to include Grey Mountain, and to the north to include Long Lake. The Commissioner of the Yukon shall be requested to extend the Chadburn Lake Park to include Grey Mountain, and Long Lake as part of the Park Reserve.
2. A comprehensive new management plan for the entire Chadburn Lake Park, Grey Mountain and Long Lake area may be prepared and should emphasize the protection of the watershed and the integrity of natural and heritage features.
3. The Hidden Lakes, Ear Lake and Chadburn Lake areas have excellent wildlife viewing potential and offer opportunities for features to be developed to encourage wildlife appreciation and education. Such features based on site-specific analysis shall be integrated with other park planning initiatives.

5.4 Recreational Facilities

A key attribute to the quality of life is the provision of parks and recreational facilities in the community. Park space includes areas developed and maintained for active or passive recreational use, such as public parks, athletic fields, playgrounds, gardens and natural areas. Recreational facilities, on the other hand, include arenas, multi-use complexes, and other indoor sport facilities.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan has guided the City in the delivery of recreation and leisure services since 1994. The Plan outlines park and recreation principles, as well as the current situation related to parks and open space, indoor leisure services, and programming and policies. Since the Parks and Recreation Master Plan was a five-year plan, it will need to be updated.

Policies

1. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan (1994) shall be reviewed and updated to ensure that policies are relevant and reflect changing priorities, needs and demands in the community. The updated Master Plan may include:
    a. comprehensive mapping indicating existing or proposed future park, recreation, and open space;
    b. an updated park classification system for both passive and recreational park space; and
    c. an update of park and outdoor recreation facility standards.
2. A multi-use design philosophy, rather than single purpose, shall be considered in design and development of new public recreation facilities.

3. All future major recreational facilities shall be centralized and accessible to all members of the community. This may include locating future major recreation facilities at key intersections or near a neighbourhood entrance.

4. For recreational facilities that are at the end of their life span, a feasibility study shall be conducted to determine if the facility should be replaced, enhanced, and/or relocated.

5.5 Outdoor Recreation Designation

The Outdoor Recreation designation refers to outdoor recreation activities that require extensive sites and which use the physical environment for commercial purposes or non-profit purposes. This designation includes golf courses, campgrounds, recreation clubs, amusement parks, downhill ski facilities, and cross-country ski trails. Accessory commercial uses such as a restaurant, retail sales and service are permitted within this designation.

Policies

1. Outdoor recreation areas may be used for recreation clubs, ski hills and trails, golf courses, amusement parks and campgrounds. Accessory uses may include warming huts and retail and restaurant services subject to pertinent bylaws and regulations.

2. Existing golf courses situated between the Alaska Highway and the Yukon River (Mountain View and Meadow Lake Golf Course) may be considered for expansion, but the extent of development is to be contained within the general boundaries of the Outdoor Recreation designation. Golf course operations may include ancillary facilities such as a club house, restaurant, maintenance facilities and related uses. These areas are not expected to include residential development, with the exception of caretaker facilities.

3. Motorized recreation use is permitted in Mt. McIntyre cross country skiing area for trail grooming, ski race logistics, summer wood cutting in the Logan Burn area, and for existing snowmobile user trails. New trails may be subject to community consultation in order to reduce the conflict between motorized and non-motorized recreation users.

Map 2 – Trail Network

Chapter 6
Social Environment

Whitehorse is known for its ability to sustain a strong arts community, diverse social programs and a rich history. Whitehorse is safe and there is access to affordable housing and educational opportunities. However, various social programs will have to adapt to an ever-changing population. Consideration needs to be given to the diverse nature of the community, including support for the needs of all age groups, and social and economic backgrounds.

OCP Vision

Ensure that all residents live in a safe community, and have access to affordable housing, educational opportunities, and recreational facilities. Recognize and support community diversity and consider the needs of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds.

6.1 Winter City Planning

Whitehorse is a northern city, and has a winter climate that includes limited daylight, moderate snowfall, sub-zero temperatures, and high wind chills. Several festivals and events occur during the winter months, including the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous Winter Festival, the Frostbite Music Festival, and the Yukon Quest. To reflect living in a winter climate, this Plan stresses the importance of incorporating winter design elements in improving social interaction and liveability of the City during winter months such as increased sun exposure for new residential buildings.

The Yukon Quest, an international sled dog race, is held every year in February.

Policies

1. Due to Whitehorse's cold winter climate, snow and prevailing southwest winds, design criteria may be established in order to improve outdoor recreation areas, and public walkways. This may include sheltering boards, screens, walls and berms for wind shelter.
2. Where possible, sun exposure shall be maximized for new and existing development.
3. Due to limited winter sunlight, design elements may include leaving snow on the ground, except for vehicular access, and using clear materials for bus shelters. Large walls that receive considerable sunlight may be placed next to buildings to create calm and warmer outdoor spaces.
4. Evergreen planting shall be emphasized in order to offer a greater variety of colour during winter months.
5. Design and programming for public places should include provision for year-round activity such as annual festivals and special events.

6.2 Arts Community

Council Strategic Plan

"Cultural groups work co-operatively to create a friendly and supportive community and all citizens are provided with a safe, secure and enjoyable living environment. The citizens of Whitehorse are committed to improving their quality of life through a wide choice of sport, recreational and cultural activities."

Whitehorse has a thriving arts community, which enhances the region as an attractive place to operate a business and retain skilled employees. Some of the more well known cultural facilities in Whitehorse include the Whitehorse Public Library, Yukon Arts Centre, Guild Hall, MacBride Museum, and Beringia Centre among others. The recent downtown and riverfront projects provide an opportunity to expand the arts community by encouraging outdoor displays and interactive art and interpretive opportunities. Also, there is a need for a large multi-purpose facility to effectively host festivals and other events.

Policies

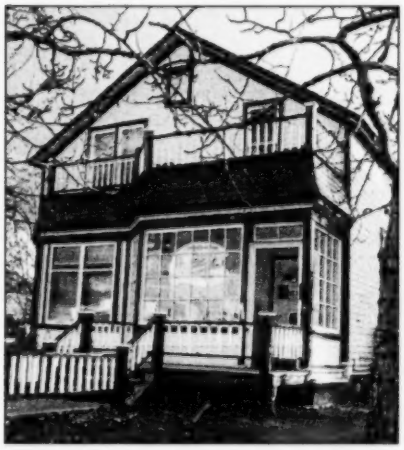
1. The City recognizes the outstanding efforts of the various cultural service organizations in Whitehorse in helping to enrich the lives of residents and visitors alike by creating a more complete and healthy community in which to live and visit. The City shall continue to provide grants to cultural organizations within annual budget provisions.
2. Cultural facilities, including art galleries and museums, shall be concentrated in high activity areas such as the downtown core and riverfront, Yukon College, and the Whitehorse International Airport.
3. Consideration may be given to creating or promoting a seasonal, or temporary cultural district, which will effectively concentrate artisans and other local entrepreneurs to create a critical mass of activity in an area open to the enjoyment for residents and visitors. Such a cultural district shall be located within or near the downtown core, or along the downtown riverfront.
4. The installation of public art on or within public buildings and property, including the riverfront walkway, shall be strongly encouraged. Public art may include permanent and temporary installations of statuary, murals and other visual art displays.
5. Consideration may be given to the provision of a multi-purpose facility in order to host festivals and other events. This facility shall be centrally located within downtown Whitehorse, adjacent to a major intersection, or an entrance to a neighbourhood.

Whitehorse Festival along Main Street
Source: City of Whitehorse

6.3 Heritage Management

The Whitehorse area has a historical tradition in mining and transportation and a strong sense of First Nation's history. As a result, there are a number of historical sites, including copper mines, buildings, historic wood camps and fur farms, archaeological areas, and cemetery and burial sites. The approximate locations of some of these historical sites are displayed in Map 3.

Most of the Yukon River corridor also has a rich First Nation as well as a more contemporary history. Several areas are identified as deserving special attention. These include both banks and uplands of the corridor located in and around Schwatka Lake, between the White Pass & Yukon Route railway, and the Hidden Lakes area extending to Riverdale. Another area with significant First Nation heritage value is the mouth of Croucher Creek, known to have been the location of camp sites. First Nations are to be consulted with regard to any new uses. The following policies consider heritage areas along the Yukon River and the Whitehorse Copper Belt. Section 9.1 of Chapter 9 outlines policies for the preservation of historical sites and buildings within the downtown core.



Heritage House in LePage Park
Source: City of Whitehorse

Policies

1. With limited remnants remaining of the American Laundry, constructed during World War II for the U.S. Army, it is proposed that a simple marker identify this location, along with signage that may be integrated with a potential boat launch site.

2. The Wolf Creek area is a traditional fishing area identified by the Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation, and may be reflected in interpretive written or educational material, augmented with information on the natural history.

3. The area between Canyon City to Miles Canyon is marked by First Nation's trails and a traditional fish camp, as well as Gold Rush tramlines built to avoid the rapids. With the Hepburn Tramline trail now used for horse trail riding, efforts need to be made to preserve the old rail bed. Remaining features may be considered for capping as a means of limiting deterioration.

4. The Robert Service Campground site has traditionally been used as a fish camp and also as a village site. The current recreational campground may be enhanced by offering images and stories of early recreation in the Whitehorse area.

5. Heritage areas such as Canyon City, historic copper mines along the Whitehorse Copper Belt, and various historic wood camps along the Yukon River may be considered by the City and the Yukon Government for specific preservation initiatives.

6. In consultation with the Yukon and Federal Government, known archaeological and historical sites shall be identified for protection in undeveloped areas to ensure valuable heritage resources are preserved. Interpretive facilities may be developed at archaeological and historical sites, and shall be considered only in collaboration with First Nations, where First Nation artefacts or traditions apply.

6.4 Land Management

Most of the undeveloped lands in the city represent lands under title of the Commissioner of the Yukon. Co-operation in managing and transferring such properties will continue.

Policies

1. The City shall continue to pursue the transfer of vacant Commissioner's land within the city to the jurisdiction of the City of Whitehorse, where practically and economically feasible.

2. In order to facilitate economic growth, the City shall work to ensure a two year supply of developable land in appropriate locations and for a range of suitable uses.

3. For subdivision applications, walkways and public utility lots may be addressed as part of the public land use dedication.

6.5 First Nations

People of aboriginal origin have a strong presence in the Whitehorse area. The Kwanlin Dun First Nation, based in the McIntyre subdivision of Whitehorse, has cultural affiliations with the Northern and Southern Tutchone as well as with the Tagish from Marsh Lake, but is also an amalgamation of many Yukon First Nation culture groups. Before the establishment of Whitehorse as a central settlement, the headwaters of the Yukon River were home for the Tagish Kwan, and a regular meeting place for other nations of First People who came to trade with them, such as the Tlingit, Kaska, Han, Gwich'in and Tutchone. Recent archaeological digs at Annie Lake and Fish Lake confirm the existence, and continual use, of seasonal hunting and fishing camps for more than 5,000 years. Today, the Kwanlin Dun people face unique issues stemming from their presence in an urban centre rather than a smaller community.

The Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation, who separated from the Kwanlin Dun First Nation in 1998, are affiliated with the Southern Tutchone Tribal Council and have members who are Southern Tutchone and Tagish. The Ta'an Kwach'an people were concentrated more along southern Lake Laberge, as far north as Hootalinqua and the Takhini area. In November 2001, the Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation ratified a final settlement with the Yukon and Federal Government regarding settlement lands that took effect in April 2002. The Final Agreement follows the format of the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA), but with specific provisions that are unique to the environment and to the people.

The Kwanlin Dun First Nation are currently negotiating their First Nation Final Agreements and Self-Government Agreement with the Federal and Yukon Government. The Kwanlin Dun First Nation have entered into a Land Claims Memorandum of Understanding with Canada and the Yukon; however, they have not publicly released information pertaining to negotiated interim selected land and this has created some uncertainty about the process and the time lines involved.

Once land claims have been settled by the Kwanlin Dun First Nation, it is anticipated that they will consider developing some of their Settlement Land. This will assist in clarifying long term land uses. The OCP may need to be amended in such circumstances.

Policies

1. The City of Whitehorse shall continue to foster and promote positive communications with the Kwanlin Dun and the Ta'an Kwach'an First Nations on land use issues in the Whitehorse area.

2. Once land claims are finalized, and land uses for Settlement Lands have been clarified, an amendment to the Official Community Plan may be required. The process of a change in land use and the subsequent change in designation is subject to the Self-Government and Final Land Claim Agreement.

6.6 Social Well-Being

A high quality of life has always been a priority for Whitehorse residents. This includes qualities such as the general safety of the community, and access to affordable housing, social services, recreational services, and educational opportunities.

Policies

Many people choose to live in Whitehorse for its combination of modern city comfort and small-town neighbourliness, in one of the most beautiful wilderness settings in North America.

1. The provision and expansion of recreational and entertainment facilities shall be encouraged in order to address the needs of youth, children, and young adults, and to attract more families to the City of Whitehorse.

2. The provision of seniors housing, and related services, which encourages independent living in a support setting, such as "congregate" housing development, may be supported. Housing units for seniors should be adequately designed for special needs and include a variety of affordable units that are based on the "aging in place" concept.

3. The City shall continue to liaise with private and public agencies to provide for the needs of people with disabilities. Buildings that provide a public service shall be made fully accessible for people that have a disability.

4. The City shall work with the RCMP to improve personal safety by encouraging residents and neighbourhoods to participate in crime prevention programs such as Block Parents, Neighbourhood Watch, Citizens on Patrol, and/or Crime Stoppers.

5. The City will consider development of data and indicators on the quality of life of its residents. Collaboration between municipal departments and other agencies involved in social planning initiatives shall be encouraged.

Map 3 – Historical Sites

Chapter 7
Residential

Whitehorse offers a wide range of housing choices to its residents, from multiple family apartments to large country residential lots. The housing composition as of 1996 included single-family homes (55% of the housing stock), apartments (17%), duplexes (6%), mobile homes (11%), and semi-detached/row houses (11%). A number of these homes are located within the downtown core (12%) whereas over 78% are in suburban neighbourhoods such as Riverdale, Copper Ridge, and Porter Creek. The remaining 10% are located in country residential areas such as Cowley Creek, Wolf Creek, and Hidden Valley.

OCP Vision

Focus on creating a high quality of life for all residents, and consider the visual, social, environmental and community impacts of development.

Chapter 2 indicated that as many as 5,000 new homes may be required over the next 25 years. Several studies, including the Lower Porter Creek Concept Study (1994) and the Beyond Copper Ridge Feasibility Study (1999), have indicated that over 8,000 fully serviced homes could be accommodated in those respective study areas. As a result, Whitehorse has more than enough land to house new residents over the next 25 years.

Council Strategic Plan

"We envision a community that offers opportunities to encourage young people to stay in Whitehorse creating a healthy mix of youth, families and elders."

Overlooking Riverdale

7.1 Settlement Patterns

Whitehorse has historically been based on a strong city centre, but has evolved through the development of many separate neighbourhoods, both urban and rural in nature, along the Alaska Highway. A challenging aspect in formulating

an overall land use plan is to define a more cohesive approach to the existing settlement pattern. Running counter to this challenge has been the consistently strong demand for country residential lots that are 1.0 hectare or larger. This has created a dispersed development pattern over parts of the northern and southern sectors of the city. Many residents understand the impact of country residential living on the environment. Such parcels occupy a much larger 'footprint' than smaller urban residential lots and occupy a greater amount of natural open space. Nevertheless, the Plan recognizes that country residential living continues to represent a valued lifestyle for a portion of the population.

Infill, which usually requires a reduction in the minimum lot size, or the limited development of vacant land adjacent to an existing neighbourhood, may be considered for urban residential areas. Redevelopment into higher densities, on the other hand, is more appropriate for the downtown area. Both infilling and redevelopment is more economical than construction in new areas, and provide a more energy efficient and a more cost effective use of the City's infrastructure. However, appropriate greenspace must be maintained near areas of infill.

The OCP has designated more than 1500 hectares of vacant land for future residential purposes, which will more than accommodate a variety of growth rates for the next 25 years.

The residential policies in this document recognize the continued importance and focus on more urban forms of development, providing for a range of smaller parcels and multiple family housing. In recognition of the need to offer a range of residential options, the OCP provides for several residential density classifications from a lower density Residential - Country designation to a higher density Residential - Urban category. With respect to new urban residential areas, the Lower Porter Creek and Beyond Copper Ridge area have been set aside for new homes and accessory services, with housing densities ranging from 9 units/hectare to 16 units/hectare. These areas would all be phased in over time. In addition, the former White Pass Tank Farm near Valleyview and the Porter Creek extension is designated for future residential development.

Planning Studies

Future development or redevelopment will be identified through the preparation of a Planning Study or an Area Development Scheme (ADS). A Planning Study is fairly broad in nature, and would be typically used to identify the most suitable land use for a defined area. An example of a Planning Study is the Lower Porter Creek Concept Study, and the Beyond Copper Ridge

Feasibility Study. Many of the recommendations from these studies have been incorporated into this Plan. The need for future Planning Studies may be determined from time-to-time by Council.

Area Development Schemes

Area Development Schemes are usually more detailed than a Planning Study, are adopted by Council and, as a result, act as a secondary plan to the city-wide OCP. These are areas where land use issues exist or need to be resolved at a level of detail that is beyond the scope of this document. An ADS is primarily used for new development that requires subdivision design detail, servicing standards, and cost estimates. They typically include the following considerations:

- the provision of parks, recreation, open space and facilities;
- impacts on existing residential and other developments;
- impacts on municipal infrastructure;
- phasing of development;
- terrain, geotechnical and hydrogeological investigations;
- transportation or road networks;
- traffic considerations;
- environmental impacts and local climate considerations;
- public uses, including educational facilities;
- heritage and archaeological resources;
- reclamation and habitat restoration plans of disturbed areas;
- location of structure and facilities for utilities;
- wildlife and habitat considerations; and
- the provision of trails providing access to open spaces, other developed areas, and the hinterland.

A number of Area Development Schemes have been prepared in the past, including Gunner's Field ADS, South Access ADS, Whitehorse Copper ADS, and the Forestview ADS. This Community Plan incorporates the principal elements of each ADS, and they are reflected within the policies, and the Land Use Designation Map (Map 13). This Plan also identifies areas for future Area

Development Schemes that may be conducted during the life of this Plan. It will depend upon the rate of population growth, housing demand, and other land use issues. An ADS is desirable for Lower Porter Creek, Beyond Copper Ridge, the former White Pass Tank Farm, Takhini/Range Road, Porter Creek extension and the Long Lake area.

Policies

1. One single-dwelling residential building may be constructed on any titled lot, subject to the Zoning Bylaw, and other applicable bylaws and regulations.
2. Area Development Schemes (ADS) are to be prepared for areas within the city facing development and/or redevelopment pressure. An ADS shall be consistent with the Official Community Plan and be adopted by Council.
3. The White Pass Tank Farm, Lower Porter Creek and Beyond Copper Ridge have been identified as potential fully serviced neighbourhoods, complete with housing, neighbourhood commercial uses, schools, places of worship, and parks. However, the physical layout, in addition to servicing standards and cost estimates need to be determined prior to development. An Area Development Scheme shall be prepared for each area and shall include consultation with nearby residents.
4. An Area Development Scheme shall be prepared for the Takhini/Range Road area that includes a review of housing conditions, the Airport's Noise Exposure Forecast contours, and examines the potential for housing redevelopment in the Takhini/Range Road Areas, and for possible improvements to the Northland and Takhini Mobile Home Parks. Other Area Development Schemes may be prepared when directed by Council.
5. The White Pass Tank Farm near Valleyview is established as a Direct Control District, pursuant to Section 291 of the Municipal Act. This will allow Council to directly control the use and development of land and buildings within the area. This area shall be redeveloped for residential and commercial purposes only after it has been remediated in accordance with applicable legislation.
6. The Wickstrom Road and Long Lake area, east of the Yukon River, is considered to have potential for future residential development. This area is subject to completion of an Area Development Scheme and development of a second river crossing to provide an alternative source of access prior to development.
7. The City shall encourage the development of vacant sites or the redevelopment of under-utilized sites for residential purposes in the downtown area.

7.2 Existing Neighbourhoods

As mentioned earlier, the City of Whitehorse is largely made up of a series of neighbourhoods separated by greenspace, topography, rivers, or other natural features. This has created distinctive neighbourhoods, each with their own set of issues and concerns. Some of these neighbourhoods have well-established neighbourhood associations, and have been very active throughout the planning process for the Plan. One issue that was raised on a regular basis, was the need for neighbourhood plans. That is, there was a desire for a more detailed land use and visionary plan for established neighbourhoods. Table 6 indicates some of the specific issues for neighbourhoods that were identified during the preparation of the OCP. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, nor does it include every established neighbourhood. Furthermore, Maps 4, 5 and 6 provide additional detail for several neighbourhoods that are fully serviced and have urban densities. These neighbourhood maps indicate the existing location of schools, parks, greenbelt, neighbourhood commercial facilities, and areas of potential residential infill development. These maps are not meant to be interpreted as a final land use designation map.

Table 6
Common Neighbourhood Objectives and Issues

Common Objectives	Common Issues
• maintain greenbelt and natural areas • maintain a good balance of schools, stores, and housing • maintain quiet and small neighbourhood character • ensure that community maintains its unique feel • ensure access to recreation trails	• infilling of greenbelt areas • concerns and uncertainty about future development plans • protect recreation trails • protect wildlife habitat • ensure public consultation for any land use changes

Neighbourhood Strategic Plan

This Plan encourages neighbourhoods to collaborate with the City in order to prepare a Neighbourhood Strategic Plan (NSP), which will define a neighbourhood's vision and future objectives. These objectives will then be translated into a specific action plan. Completion of such plans will depend on neighbourhood desires and the fiscal capability of the City. The area to be defined in the Neighbourhood Strategic Plan will need to be determined by the specific neighbourhood. For example, the neighbourhood of Valleyview may wish to be a part of a McIntyre planning process.

Policies

1. Every effort shall be made to minimize the impact of natural areas surrounding existing neighbourhoods. This shall be accomplished through the establishment of the Greenbelt land use designation and the protection of parks and green space as indicated on Maps 4, 5 and 6.
2. Potential residential infill and new development areas such as Lower Porter Creek, Beyond Copper Ridge and Porter Creek Extension shall be designed in a manner to protect significant trail corridors.
3. Although the Lower Porter Creek area has been designated for future residential development for several years, residents who live in Porter Creek have noted concerns with this future development, including the loss of greenspace, recreation trails, increased wood smoke and noise. These concerns and any impacts to the existing Porter Creek neighbourhood shall be addressed in a future Area Development Scheme for Lower Porter Creek.
4. Another area of concern for both Porter Creek and Takhini residents is the possible residential expansion of Porter Creek to the south, often referred to as the Porter Creek Expansion. Furthermore, Yukon College has had a continuing interest in this area known as the "College Endowment Lands". As a result, the City shall consult with the local community, Yukon College and the Yukon Government regarding the final land use details and overall design of the Porter Creek Extension.
5. In order to define the interests of the local community, a series of Neighbourhood Strategic Plans may need to be prepared. This will depend upon the financial resources of both the City and neighbourhood associations, and the determination of residents in a specific neighbourhood. Such a Neighbourhood Strategic Plan shall be consistent with the Official Community Plan and may be adopted by Council.
6. The area and issues to be defined in the Neighbourhood Strategic Plan shall be determined in collaboration with the specific neighbourhood.

7.3 Secondary Suites

Secondary suites are self-contained living quarters within a single-family residential dwelling with food preparation and sanitary facilities and are often located in basement or ground level areas of the dwelling. The creation of secondary suites can be an important component of increasing housing affordability in a community both for the renter of the secondary suite and the owner of the principal dwelling. The secondary suite provides a housing alternative and increases the supply of rental accommodation while only modestly increasing the housing density within a neighbourhood and not affecting the built form. Issues such as parking for the occupants of the secondary suite can sometimes become contentious within an existing

neighbourhood but can be overcome by zoning provisions to require an additional parking space.

Policies

1. Secondary suites may be permitted within a single-family dwelling, subject to local zoning regulations. The suite shall have a maximum gross floor area of 100 m^2.
2. It is recognized that some secondary suites are illegal due to local zoning regulations or building code infractions. The City may consider legalizing existing secondary suites on a case-by-case basis. This may include consultation with neighbouring residents.
3. Council may consider permitting temporary secondary dwellings (sometimes known as garden suites) in all Residential designations to accommodate ageing relatives on a time-limited basis. Strict measures will need to be put in place in order to ensure that these garden suites are not used for rental accommodation. This may include a housing agreement between the City and the property owner/agency for a limited time period and/or garden suites may be regulated through zoning. In all cases, garden suites shall be moveable, detached dwellings that have a maximum gross floor area of 100m^2.

7.4 Residential - Country Designation

Approximately 10% of the Whitehorse population lives within a country residential neighbourhood, which includes Cowley Creek, Mary Lake, Spruce Hill, Wolf Creek, Wolf Creek North, Pineridge and Canyon Crescent to the south, and MacPherson, Mile 2 Mayo Road, and Hidden Valley to the north. Country residential neighbourhoods are rural based, and generally rely on on-site water and sewer services. Country residential living is a popular lifestyle choice as it allows people to own their own piece of natural open space, have immediate access to outdoor recreation while living close to the services and amenities of Whitehorse. However, people who live in country residential neighbourhoods tend to rely on the use of the automobile since services such as a grocery store, banks, and schools are further away. This adds to traffic congestion, air pollution, and weaker support for transit. This Plan suggests a limitation on new country residential neighbourhoods, with growth occurring only in the Whitehorse Copper and Forestview areas.

Policies

Provision is made for a wide range of home based businesses in the Residential – Country designation

1. Rural residential settlement shall be confined mainly to lands designated as Residential - Country. The purpose of this designation is to allow a rural based lifestyle outside of the urban core for single-family dwellings.
2. Residential - Country areas shall be used to accommodate one single-family dwelling, which may be accompanied by a home-based business, or a secondary suite. Public uses such as an educational facility, or a park, and semi-public uses, including a religious facility, or community hall may be considered in a Residential - Country designation, subject to proper zoning.
3. The opportunities for part-time occupations and small-scale enterprises in Residential - Country areas shall be supported by allowing a wide range of home-based businesses, including artisan craft workshops, hobby farms and greenhouses.
4. Residential - Country areas shall be maintained, where possible, on the basis of on-site sewage disposal and potable water sources.
5. The minimum lot size for land in Residential - Country areas shall be 1.0 hectare. This may be reduced to 0.5 hectares for new development:
    a. if testing for potable ground water sources indicates that all projected homes can be adequately supplied; and
    b. where testing determines that soils have adequate sewage percolation and does not conflict with groundwater resources.
6. Consideration may be given to re-designating Residential - Country areas to Residential - Urban areas, provided that:
    a. an approved community water system and sewer system is implemented, and connected to the city system; and
    b. housing densities are feasible at a minimum of 6 units per hectare.
7. In planning for new country residential settlement, the City shall give consideration to:
    a. careful siting of local roads and maintaining road continuity;
    b. the potential location of utilities including power and telephone;
    c. wildlife values and green corridors, including recreation links between nodes of country residential development;
    d. maintenance of recreation and trail links as established in the Whitehorse Trail Plan;
    e. privacy between residences through the use of natural buffers; and
    f. inclusion of a variety of lot sizes, to accommodate more rural lifestyles and a range of economic needs.
8. Within the Residential - Country designation, access shall, wherever possible, consist of a loop road to facilitate emergency access. Short cul-de-sacs are acceptable for minor roads within country residential areas.

7.5 Cousins Aerodrome

The Cousins Aerodrome is a 1000 metre runway strip that is registered for public use and used primarily by private aircraft, training schools, and emergency landing purposes for small aircraft when the Whitehorse International Airport is covered in fog. Land along the southeast side of Cousins Aerodrome is encouraged to be developed as a residential airpark. A residential airpark would include the creation of country residential lots that are approximately 1 hectare in size. The only difference with these homes compared to conventional country residential lots is that homeowners would be permitted to construct a hangar for their private aircraft. This creates an opportunity to provide for an alternative living style, unique in the City, adjacent to the Cousins Aerodrome. The residential airpark is designated as Residential – Country, and the following policies apply.

Policies

1. The purpose of a residential airpark is to allow modified country residential development. A single-family dwelling, which may be accompanied by a home-based business, a hangar, and accessory buildings shall be permitted.
2. In order to properly manage common property such as a shared taxiway system, or a shared tie down area for aircraft, consideration shall be made to strata title all residential lots within the residential airpark, subject to the Condominium Act. This would allow exclusive ownership of individual lots, and proper maintenance of common properties through the establishment of a Strata Council.
3. In order to be consistent with Yukon Government aerodrome operating policies, Cousins Aerodrome shall remain as leased land. The residential areas may be linked via a private taxiway but shall be under separate ownership from Cousins Aerodrome.
4. Council shall work with the Yukon Government and all other relevant agencies and departments to address pertinent safety issues and work with the Forestview, MacPherson and Hidden Valley residents regarding noise issues.

7.6 Residential – Urban Designation

Urban residential neighbourhoods represent nearly 80% of all existing households. Although the majority of homes are single-family, there are a number of areas that are multi-family, which include townhouses and apartments.

Policies

1. The purpose of the Residential - Urban designation is to allow for a variety of serviced residential development in close proximity to services and amenities.
2. Residential - Urban areas shall be used to accommodate single-family dwellings, mobile homes, semi-detached housing, townhouse/row housing, communal senior's housing or apartments, and may be accompanied by a home-based business. Secondary suites may be permitted for single-family dwellings, or semi-detached housing only.

Housing in Copper Ridge

3. The Residential - Urban designation also permits neighbourhood service commercial uses, park and outdoor recreation sites, schools, religious facilities, and community halls, subject to proper zoning. These facilities are intended to primarily service the surrounding neighbourhood rather than the community at large.
4. Townhouse/row housing, and apartment development may be provided for through zoning provisions.
5. All lots that are developed or are being developed within an Residential - Urban area shall be connected to a municipal water and sewer system.
6. The maximum density for land designated as Residential - Urban shall be 20 units per hectare for single-family dwelling units, and 80 units per hectare for multi-family dwelling units.
7. In order to ensure a contiguous and compact residential pattern, and to take advantage of established utilities and road systems, the potential for infill and redevelopment of established residential areas shall be reviewed, and phased-in over a long-term period, where practical.
8. Since additional housing may directly affect the existing community, significant public involvement is desirable prior to any residential infill development. The City, in cooperation with nearby residents, shall act as the lead agency in any neighbourhood planning, zoning and subdivision approvals.
9. Maps 4, 5 and 6 indicate the location of potential residential infill areas in the future. The boundaries and extent of infill development shall be based on individual site analysis and compatibility with adjacent land uses.

7.7 Residential – Downtown Designation

The purpose of the Residential - Downtown designation is to preserve the historic downtown neighbourhood, locally known as the "Old Town". The "Old Town" neighbourhood is bound by Sixth Avenue to the east, the escarpment to the west, Pioneer Cemetery to the south, and Ogilvie Street to the north. It is characterized by older historic single-family homes on small lots.

Policies

1. Land designated as Residential - Downtown is to be used for single-family residential, multi-family residential, and park related uses and shall not exceed a maximum density of 60 units per hectare. Educational or religious facilities may be permitted, subject to appropriate zoning. Commercial uses, except for home based businesses, are not permitted in this designation.
2. The character of the city's oldest existing neighbourhood shall be protected by encouraging compatible development and facilitating the upgrading of established housing stock.
3. The Old Town neighbourhood has some of the oldest municipal services in the City and is need of upgrades. This includes re-surfacing of roads and improvements to underground utilities. The City shall continue with the proposed downtown infrastructure renewal program.

7.8 Mixed Use – Residential/Commercial Designation

The purpose of the Mixed Use – Residential/Commercial designation is to promote the mix and integration of multi-family residential and commercial uses. With the exception of properties along Centennial in Porter Creek, the Mixed Use – Residential/Commercial designation is concentrated in the downtown. This designation will help to increase the vitality of the downtown by encouraging a diverse range of land uses, with a focus on residential, thus ensuring that there is on-going activity downtown.

Closeleigh Manor, Downtown Whitehorse

Policies

1. Land designated as Mixed Use – Residential/Commercial is to be used for multi-family residential, retail, restaurants, tourist accommodations, office, public parks and open space.
2. Multi-family residential development may consist of a use in a single structure, or a mix of Residential/Commercial uses. Buildings that have a combination of residential and commercial are encouraged, subject to commercial uses being confined to the ground floor.

3. Continuity and interaction between buildings and the street, particularly on major pedestrian corridors along 3rd Avenue and 1st Avenue, shall be encouraged.

4. Vehicular access for residential properties within a Mixed Use – Residential/Commercial designated area may be encouraged to be from the rear of the property via a laneway.

5. Densities within this designation shall be complementary to established building and use patterns and shall reflect the following:

   a. maximum of 60 units per hectare for the area along Centennial Road;

   b. maximum of 60 units per hectare for the area located between Quartz Road and the Yukon River;

   c. maximum of 120 units per hectare, and 4 storeys for areas south of the Commercial - Downtown designation except for Lot 1, Block F Downtown, located at 4051 4th Avenue, which shall have a height restriction of 20 metres;

   d. maximum of 150 units per hectare, and 4 storeys for areas north of the Commercial - Downtown designation; and

   e. maximum densities may be increased by 20% for congregate care or seniors housing.

   These density designations are illustrated on Map 14.

Map 4 – Existing Land Uses: Porter Creek/Crestview Neighbourhood

Map 5 – Existing Land Uses: Downtown/Riverdale Neighbourhood

Map 6 – Existing Land Uses: Valleyview to Copper Ridge Neighbourhood

Chapter 8
Economic Development

OCP Vision

Create a diverse, flexible and vibrant local economy that provides sustainable employment. Produce a vital economy adaptable to future economic change.

The City of Whitehorse is the government and service centre for the Yukon. The majority of commercial and government activities occur within the downtown core, which includes a variety of goods and services, restaurants, hotels and offices. Smaller retail centres exist in Riverdale, Porter Creek, Copper Ridge and along the Alaska Highway. Due to the importance of the downtown as an economic generator and as an area with a wide range of unique land use issues, it is dealt with in a separate chapter in this Plan (Chapter 9 – Downtown).

In addition to commercial space, Whitehorse also caters to service industrial activities such as light manufacturing, transportation and storage facilities. Industrial nodes within the City include Marwell, Kulan, Taylor, McRae and a number of smaller sites along the Alaska Highway. Although these areas have the potential for some infill development, the Whitehorse Copper area, which is presently undeveloped, has an opportunity to attract both light and heavy industrial activities.

Council Strategic Plan

"We envision a community that has a strong diverse economic base. It is built on our role as a Canadian Capital City and as the Yukon hub for transportation, as well as resource development, technology, tourism, culture and government."

8.1 Economic Initiatives

While some economic initiatives can be translated into specific land use policies, there are a number of items of broader application. They stress the supportive environment the City wishes to retain for economic opportunities that aid in achieving prosperity for the community. Many economic actions cannot be undertaken by the City alone, but require collaborative efforts with the Yukon Government and a number of special agencies. The policies below emphasize the City's on-going support for appropriate economic development.

Policies

1. The need for sustained and long-term economic growth in the City shall be considered in reviewing any major future development project.
2. The role of the City in Economic Development is to foster a business climate that supports the expansion and diversification of the Whitehorse economy. The role of the business community is to create jobs. Each party is dependent on the other and both must work in partnership to be successful.
3. The City shall cooperate with other agencies and industry in fostering its position as the major supply and service centre for the mining industry in the Territory.
4. The City shall collaborate with groups and agencies in the tourism, arts and sport sectors to encourage and strengthen economic development and to support the City's role as a gateway to visitor trips in other areas of the Yukon.
5. Further development of Whitehorse based tourism services such as land, water and air tours, as well as cultural and historic interpretation of the region is encouraged. The City may assist in such endeavours by establishing a favourable climate for seasonal fairs, booths, and displays along the downtown waterfront area.
6. The City shall work with agencies involved in the development of the pipeline corridor. Neighbourhoods that may be affected, especially during construction, include Mary Lake and Cowley Creek. Regular consultation with these neighbourhoods shall be required.
7. The provision of temporary construction sites during the construction of the pipeline corridor may be considered in all land use designations, except for the Environmental Protection designation. Once the pipeline corridor is completed, the temporary construction sites shall be restored to as natural a state as possible.
8. A city wide Economic Development Plan may be prepared to offer additional guidance with respect to economic and development initiatives and may be revised periodically.

8.2 Natural Resource Designation

The Natural Resource designation recognizes the potential for the extraction and management of mineral and gravel deposits. Gravel extraction is fundamental to the local economy as it supplies the foundation for new construction such as buildings and roadways. There is some mineral and gravel potential along the Whitehorse Copper Belt, Sleeping Giant Hill and in the northwest corner of the city limits known as Stevens.

It has been documented that the Stevens area has significant gravel resources that could serve the City of Whitehorse and the Yukon Government for up to 70 years. Most of the gravel within this area can supply pit run, crushed basecourse, sub-base, asphalt & concrete aggregate, concrete & bedding sand, and drain rock. These materials are typically used for road and highway development, building foundations, and other forms of construction. It is an essential asset for any community to have significant gravel reserves rather than importing them from other communities or rural areas at great expense.

Policies

1. Quarry activity, including the extraction, crushing and hauling of gravel or minerals may be permitted in areas designated as Natural Resource. In addition, the remediation of soil, water and other media may be permitted in areas with this designation subject to all Municipal, Territorial and Federal regulations. The purpose of this designation is to allow resource extraction and related activities away from existing and future residential neighbourhoods. Uses shall be compatible with other Municipal, Territorial and Federal regulatory requirements in relation to approvals and licensing, including applicable impact and environmental assessment requirements.
2. Resource extraction within a Natural Resource designation shall be subject to a Plan of Restoration, review of ecosystem mapping and an environmental review. Management of gravel resources shall include time frames for phases of extraction.
3. A separate, hard surface haul road, complete with turning lanes at a highway intersection shall be required to access new quarries. Dust abatement practices are required.
4. A vegetated buffer of approximately 300-metres shall be established between areas of resource extraction and existing development and proposed new development.
5. Upon abandonment or termination of resource extraction operations, the remaining redevelopment and reclamation of the site shall begin immediately and be carried out in cooperation with the appropriate authorities. These areas shall be reclaimed to as natural a state as possible through slope grading, landscaping, and reforestation.
6. Future quarries along the north-south ridge in the Stevens area shall be phased in based on demand for gravel resources.
7. There have been a number of concerns regarding the proposed quarries within the Stevens area. In order to mitigate any perceived or real nuisances to nearby residences, the following conditions shall apply to these quarries:
    a. a natural treed buffer shall be maintained along the east face of the ridge;

b. an additional buffer of trees shall be included along both sides of the haul road to reduce site visibility and activity noise;

c. hours of operation shall be consistent with the City of Whitehorse Noise Bylaw;

d. a sign describing the quarry activity shall be erected at a prominent location on the haul road outlining the development sequence and hours of operation;

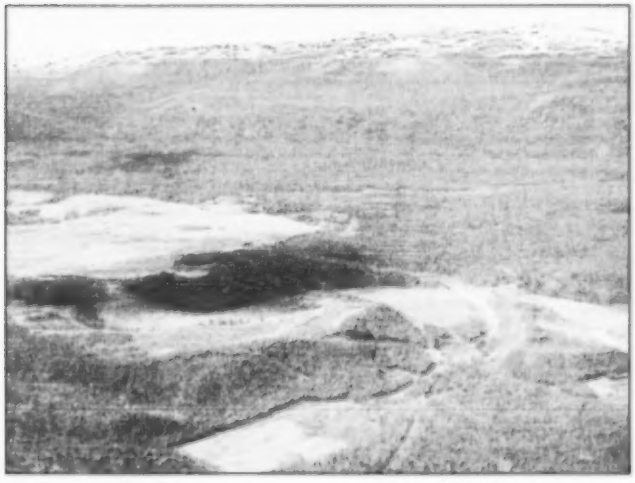
e. the site perimeter shall be posted to warn of safety considerations from unauthorized entry into the pit area;

f. the haul road shall be gated to discourage off-season use by all-terrain vehicles;

g. restrictions shall be placed on certain activities such as crushing to reduce noise exposure; and

h. progressive reclamation shall be required before or in conjunction with the development of additional quarries.

8. Further environmental studies, and management plans shall be conducted, in consultation with the local neighbourhood, prior to any gravel or mineral extraction on or around Sleeping Giant Hill.



Whitehorse Copper Area

8.3 Commercial - Service Designation

Whitehorse caters to a diverse range of commercial activities and support services. This includes the more pedestrian-oriented retail services in the downtown core, larger automobile-oriented commercial operations at the base of Two Mile Hill, smaller highway commercial outlets and local neighbourhood and convenience centres.

The purpose of the Commercial – Service designation is to identify and designate areas that are designed for and are largely dependent upon automobile access. At a smaller scale, such areas may also function as a purely local neighbourhood centre accessible from principal roads within the various residential sectors of the city. This contrasts with the "main street" commercial uses in the Commercial – Downtown designation, which are primarily pedestrian oriented. Examples of service commercial operations include convenience centre malls, large retail uses, fast food restaurants, hotels, automobile dealerships and service stations. Smaller neighbourhood centres which may accommodate a wider range of locally oriented commercial activities may be permitted within a Commercial – Service designation or a Residential – Urban designation, where appropriately zoned.

A significant portion of land designated Commercial – Service is located at the base of Two Mile Hill, which provides for a transition between the more pedestrian oriented commercial uses of the downtown core and the service industrial uses within Marwell. This transition area is suitable for larger scale retail uses, and would be incompatible with smaller scale retail uses in the downtown core. Since they can complement the activities in the downtown it is deemed desirable to have major service commercial uses situated near the base of Two Mile Hill rather than in alternative locations such as the Alaska Highway.

Service commercial nodes along the Alaska Highway are proposed to be more compact in nature, service the traveling public, and act as local convenience centres. These areas are not meant to compete directly with businesses in the downtown. The focus along the Alaska Highway is to concentrate such land uses in defined areas to minimize commercial sprawl along the highway corridor. The type and level of development must also be suited to site conditions and surrounding land uses.

Policies

1. Commercial - Service areas may be used for a wide range of retail and office use, restaurants, tourist accommodations, service stations, automobile dealerships and entertainment facilities. Public uses including education facilities, health care facilities, social services, and semi-public uses such as religious facilities, recreational facilities, and community halls may also be considered in a Commercial – Service designation. Accessory activities such as club houses and care taker facilities may be permitted.

2. Areas that are designated Commercial – Service along the Alaska Highway are intended to allow for small-scale commercial activities that would serve the travelling public and nearby residents. Land uses may be limited to smaller sites and buildings in keeping with a more local scale. The total gross floor area devoted to highway commercial use is suggested to be no more than 1500m^2 per site.

3. Site planning along the Alaska Highway shall be considered comprehensively, and the City may establish specific design controls to govern building appearance and siting. Major storage and parking areas shall also be screened from the Alaska Highway.

4. All Commercial – Service designations are subject to the following special considerations:

    a. suitable vegetated buffer areas of at least 15 metres shall be maintained around service commercial development which border on residential areas; buffer areas should, where practical, be publicly owned;

    b. appropriate facilities shall be provided for safe public access to and from arterial or collector roads and access driveways into parking areas shall be clearly defined and designed; and

    c. along the Alaska Highway access shall largely be from secondary roads.

8.4 Neighbourhood Service Commercial

Given the relative dispersed form of residential development for parts of the City, some provision for neighbourhood commercial activity is essential. Neighbourhood commercial centres serve as a convenient form of locally accessible products and services. The full scale of uses can be more precisely determined through zoning regulations, but the Plan provides for a broad range of activity. An important distinction for neighbourhood level commercial, however, is that the overall extent of commercial activity is controlled through a maximum site area cap to ensure that the scale is appropriate to the location and area being served.

In addition to larger neighbourhood commercial centres, the policies also provide for small individual local convenience centres, but given the relatively small site, these may be determined on a site-specific basis, without requiring a special commercial designation or mapping amendment. This could, for example, accommodate a small food store, a restaurant or similar use, and be controlled through zoning applications, thus omitting the need to amend the Community Plan.

Policies

1. Neighbourhood service commercial areas are permitted in the Residential – Urban land use designation with the purpose of providing a full range of commercial and office activity within residential neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood service commercial areas may also include, within the site, multi-family housing.
2. The total area devoted to neighbourhood service commercial uses shall not exceed a gross site area of 2 hectares or an aggregate building area on the site of 1500 m^2.
3. Neighbourhood service commercial uses shall generally be limited to sites flanking a Collector Road as defined on Map 10, or to sites situated contiguous with other neighbourhood facilities such as a community centre or educational facility.

8.5 Industrial Activities

Although the Whitehorse economy is closely tied with the fluctuations of the mining industry, only 3% of the labour force work in primary industries such as mining and only 1% of the labour force work in manufacturing industries. Furthermore, industrial land within the City, except for Marwell, are not serviced by water or sewer, and as a result, most of these areas are used for storage or other uses where municipal servicing is less of a consideration. Although there is a strong desire to attract clean technologies and higher end industrial parks, it will be difficult to intensify industrial development until there is a higher level of servicing.

The Whitehorse Copper area has the greatest potential for new industrial development, as there is a significant land base that has good proximity to the Alaska Highway, and is away from most residential areas. Marwell, on the other hand, has potential to intensify due to its proximity to municipal services, but is also under pressure for potential higher value uses given its proximity to the downtown.

Opportunities such as a high quality business park, or other clean industries may be considered. To reflect the potential range of industrial activities, two industrial classifications are proposed, one catering mainly to sites with more intensive service industrial development, the other to major sites where heavier industry can be expected and where proximity to residential areas is generally undesirable.

Policies

1. A comprehensive industrial strategy, complete with a market analysis, may be conducted in order to fully understand the development potential and requirements of industrial lands within the city limits. This study should complement the Yukon Government's work on industrial land demand.

8.6 Industrial – Service Designation

The purpose of the Industrial – Service designation is to provide appropriate areas for light industrial activity. This includes, but is not limited to, storage, light manufacturing, warehousing, and service industrial uses and generally will focus on industrial uses that can be largely accommodated within an enclosed building. Significant areas that are designated as Industrial – Service include Kulan, Taylor, parts of Whitehorse Copper, McRae, and several nodes along the Alaska Highway.

Policies

1. Industrial - Service areas are intended to accommodate support services for major industrial operations in the City, and may include machinery repair and storage, vehicle repair, equipment storage buildings, manufacturing, technology based firms, warehousing/distribution, storage yards and incidental office facilities.

2. Any use within an Industrial – Service designation shall not be offensive by reason of smoke, vibration, odour, electrical interference and produce no significant noise which interferes with the use of a contiguous lot. This is particularly important where industrial uses have the potential to impact residential areas.

3. The operation of aggregate quarries in Industrial – Service areas with known deposits, particularly those along McLean Lake road may continue, but are expected to be redeveloped over time to other service industrial uses. As such, sand and gravel quarries are perceived mainly as interim uses.

4. New industrial development and business parks incorporating clean technology and well developed buildings, which do not create adverse environmental impacts, shall be encouraged, particularly near the downtown where other

amenities are readily available. As an additional means of fostering a higher quality of industrial use, the City may apply special zoning regulations which restricts such uses to:

a. sites fully serviced with community water and sewer;

b. being undertaken entirely within a fully enclosed building, excluding any outdoor storage, which shall be screened from public rights of way;

c. having a fully landscaped yard along the road frontage; and

d. development with paved parking and loading areas.

5. Where feasible, infill development shall be encouraged in the Taylor and Kulan Industrial Parks.

6. Future long term expansion of the Kulan Industrial Park southward shall be provided for with access to this area coming from the south via the Whitehorse Landfill Access Road when, and if, the Landfill expands northwards.

7. If new areas designated as Industrial – Service abuts residential designations, a minimum 200-metre vegetated buffer area shall be provided in order to mitigate any negative impacts. The buffer areas should, where practical, be publicly owned.

8. Industrial uses visible from major roadways, such as the Alaska Highway, South Access Road, Two Mile Hill Road and the Quartz-Copper corridor, shall be required to enhance site appearance through improvements to parking and storage, clear delineation of access driveways, addition of vegetated buffers, and enhanced building design. Outdoor storage yards shall be located towards the rear of the property and be properly screened by vegetation or fencing.

Kulan Industrial Park

8.7 Industrial – Major Designation

The purpose of the Industrial - Major designation is to allow heavy industrial uses within the Whitehorse Copper and Copper Haul Road area. The Whitehorse Copper Belt has been recognized for its mineral potential and has been devoted to resource extraction for many years. The Industrial – Major designation permits mining activity and accessory services in this area. This designation is also intended to accommodate other resource industries, for example those associated with forestry and wood processing. The Whitehorse Copper area is ideal for heavy industrial activities since it is away from residential areas, significant wildlife corridors, or other conflicting land uses and is easily accessible off the Alaska Highway.

Policies

1. The Industrial – Major designation shall preserve suitable areas for heavy industrial uses, including mining and mineral exploration activity and related mining activity and industries associated with other resources, including wood processing, remediation of soil, water and other media, storage and manufacturing. Uses shall be compatible with other Territorial and Federal regulatory requirements in relation to approvals and licensing, including applicable impact and environmental assessment requirements.
2. Rock and sand quarries are also permitted uses within the Industrial – Major designation, with such uses potentially serving as an interim land use activity pending long term redevelopment to more intensively industrial uses.
3. Access to the Industrial – Major designation is to be primarily from Mt. Sima Road, to be upgraded as required. Only secondary access for employees and light service vehicles shall be by way of the Alaska Highway and other internal collector roads.
4. Heavy or major industrial uses must not be offensive by reason of smoke, vibration, odour, electrical interference and produce no significant noise which interferes with the use of a contiguous lot. This is of particular importance where there are existing residential uses.
5. New Industrial – Major designations shall, wherever physically possible, be separated from non-industrial designated areas by a vegetated buffer on a site specific basis, except for the Whitehorse copper mines where it shall be approximately 800 metres. The buffer area should, where practical, be publicly owned.

8.8 Marwell Area

The Marwell area is one of the oldest developed areas in the City. The area was first occupied by a small Kwanlin Dun First Nation village, which was incorporated into an Indian Reserve in 1916. After the Second World War, the Marwell area became the City's primary industrial area and fuel storage depot. Throughout the post war years and up to the mid 1980s, Marwell continued to be the City's primary general industrial area. However, the area's close proximity to both the downtown and Alaska Highway started to bring changes to the use and development of the Marwell area. More and more non-industrial uses and activities started to prevail. Today, the Marwell area has taken on a more mixed-use identity blending some traditional general industrial activities with service industrial, service commercial and office uses.

A planning study has been completed, entitled the Marwell Area Planning Report (2001). The study identified the most appropriate land use for the Marwell area, which includes a mix of service industrial, and service commercial uses. This is reflected in the Mixed Use – Commercial/Industrial designation, and the policies described below.

Policies

1. The Mixed Use - Commercial/Industrial specifically applies to the Marwell area, and shall encourage a mix of service commercial and service industrial activities.
2. Service commercial uses shall be concentrated along roads that have a higher exposure to the travelling public such as Quartz Road, Copper Road, Industrial Road, Calcite Road, Galena Drive, Platinum Road and Gypsum Road. Service commercial activities are also encouraged along the Yukon River with the general intent that development in this area would accommodate tourism oriented initiatives that would complement potential public recreational and interpretive initiatives along the waterfront.
3. Service industrial uses shall be concentrated in areas that are generally away from the primary road network. Service industrial properties are assumed to be larger than service commercial lots to accommodate, for example, outdoor materials and equipment storage. Furthermore, exposure to vehicle traffic is assumed to be less critical than for service commercial uses.
4. Future proposals for the use and development at the north-east intersection of Mountain View Drive and Tlingit Street must address and ensure continuing protection of the adjacent small creek that flows into the Marwell Wetlands.

5. Accessory retail and restaurant use may be encouraged within the Marwell Industrial Park due to the higher levels of municipal servicing available.

6. Appropriate measures shall be encouraged to alleviate seasonal flooding problems in the low-lying portion of the Marwell Industrial Park. This may include minimum building elevations to avoid seasonal flooding during ice jams and/or summer flooding events.

7. The Marwell Flats includes the old Canol Refinery site, industrial and commercial uses, in addition to Kwanlin Dun First Nation land. A mix of industrial and service commercial uses shall be encouraged, with a long-term provision for a waterfront walkway. Some interpretive signage reflecting the history of the area is appropriate.

8. Gradual redevelopment of the Marwell area is encouraged. This should include provisions for trail continuity along the riverfront, consideration of tourism development opportunities, and the clean up of contaminated sites in the area.

8.9 Agriculture Limited Designation

In its 1977 survey of soil and soil suitability, Agriculture Canada indicated that parts of the area surrounding the Cousins Aerodrome is "suitable for seeded forages" or "native pasture", with viability limited by the short frost-free season. As there is a moderate interest in non-soil based agricultural activity in this area, a portion of land is designated as Agriculture Limited.

Policies

1. The purpose of the Agriculture Limited designation is to accommodate the development of non-soil based agricultural land uses and to permit a broad range of complementary activities. Non-soil based agricultural uses are limited to foraging, chicken and egg production, apiaries, aviaries, and greenhouse operations.

2. A maximum of two residential dwelling units per lot may be permitted within the Agricultural Limited designation.

3. Any applications made for non-soil based agricultural activities should be carefully considered in terms of economic and market viability and should be discouraged as a means of obtaining a site for residential settlement. All applications are subject to the Yukon Agricultural Policy, which is administered through the Yukon Government.

Chapter 9
Downtown

Whitehorse has a strong and vibrant downtown that is well defined. It is located on a natural floodplain nestled between the escarpment in the west, and the Yukon River to the east. There is a high concentration of land uses and activities within the downtown, including a mix of residential, office and commercial uses, several parks, schools, and many cultural and institutional facilities.

The downtown is home to one of the first neighbourhoods of Whitehorse, locally known as the "Old Town" neighbourhood. The "Old Town" neighbourhood is situated west of the downtown commercial core, and there is a strong desire by downtown residents to preserve this area from any incompatible development. There are also heritage buildings scattered throughout the downtown.

OCP Vision

Maintain a strong sense of community by locating essential services and commercial opportunities downtown.

2nd Avenue and Main Street, Downtown Whitehorse

Council Strategic Plan

"We see our City growing toward becoming a diverse, urban community. We see a vibrant city core as a gathering place for the benefit of all."

9.1 Historical Areas

The historical character of the downtown is a significant contributor to the unique quality of this area. The mix of residential and non-residential uses and pedestrian movement from housing to retail and government areas is an important element in the experience of the historic character of the downtown. The architecture of some of the downtown buildings is an immediate indicator of the era it was built in. Following the recommendations from the Heritage Management Plan (1999), and the establishment of the Heritage Advisory Committee, criteria were established to evaluate buildings with heritage potential. After a thorough evaluation, a listing of 110 buildings and one cemetery was prepared, forming the Heritage Registry. These buildings were classified into two categories, A and B, with an A category having the greatest historical significance. The Wood Street neighbourhood has the largest concentration of heritage buildings, mostly built prior to the Second World War, and collectively represent different stages in the history of Whitehorse. There are also smaller clusters of historical buildings throughout the downtown.

S.S Klondike, Downtown Whitehorse

Policies

1. Every effort will be made to recognize buildings listed as an "A" site in the Whitehorse Heritage Registry by protecting the significance of the building's character and retaining the scale, spatial relationship, plantings and green space and, where possible, the fabric and line of the existing building.
2. The City shall cooperate with the Heritage Advisory Committee in preparing a list of potential controls and preservation incentives for buildings listed as an "A" site in the Whitehorse Heritage Registry. This shall be done in consultation with affected property owners in the neighbourhood.

3. Small clusters of heritage resources may be designated as special heritage protection areas only with the full support of the affected residents. These Heritage Districts, Neighbourhood or Areas can only be established through a resolution of Council. Council may use zoning regulations to establish guidelines respecting the manner by which the objective of each Heritage Area shall be met in order to promote redevelopment and/or renovations that are sensitive to the historical character of the area.

The majority of retail activity and cultural events are centred in the city's downtown.

9.2 Open Space and Pedestrian Links

Open spaces link people and places of activity in the urban environment and are places for activity, recreation, reflection and conversation. Examples of open space within the downtown include Rotary Peace Park, the escarpment, and LaPage Park. The waterfront walkway and the many sidewalks link these open spaces together to form a network for walking and cycling.

Policies

1. Main pedestrian routes, as depicted in Map 7, shall include wide sidewalk corridors, and include amenities such as trees, landscaping, garbage receptacles, and proper lighting.
2. Street vendors may operate their business along these major arterial pedestrian routes, subject to local bylaws.
3. The City encourages public and private partnerships to create, develop, enhance and integrate open space, pedestrian networks, and buildings along pedestrian core routes as depicted on Map 7.
4. Vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access and traffic safety shall be a priority in the approval of development applications in the Commercial – Downtown designation.
5. Improving bike safety on the Robert Campbell Bridge shall be a priority, which may include the provision of a cantilevered bicycle lane.
6. The escarpment is an integral component of the open space network in the downtown and shall be used to provide recreational, interpretive and reflective opportunities. Where appropriate, a link shall be provided between the upper escarpment and lower reserve area.

9.3 Commercial – Downtown Designation

The downtown core, which is largely bound by First Avenue, Jarvis Street, Fourth Avenue, and Hanson Street, and centred on Main Street, is the focus of commercial activity. A number of commercial activities occur within this pedestrian oriented designation, including banks, office use, restaurants, cabarets, retail operations, and hotels. The purpose of the Commercial – Downtown designation is to provide for a clearly identifiable and distinct commercial core within downtown Whitehorse. This designation serves to concentrate major commercial uses within this central area and to encourage comprehensive site planning for building renovations and new development.

Policies

All land designated as Commercial – Downtown shall be utilized for retail, restaurants, tourist accommodations, entertainment facilities, parks and open space in a pedestrian environment.

1. Land designated as Commercial – Downtown are intended for retail, offices, restaurants, tourist accommodations, entertainment facilities, public parks and open space. Major office facilities, such as business, government, and cultural facilities are strongly encouraged to locate within the Commercial - Downtown designation.
2. In order to maintain and enhance the pedestrian environment of the town centre, buildings along the Main Street corridor shall be no more than 4 storeys in height, and shall be encouraged to have a zero lot line setback from front and sideyard lot lines. Future development shall complement the existing development pattern along Main Street and respect and support Main Street's characteristics as a strong pedestrian environment.
3. Retail oriented uses, especially along Main Street, shall be concentrated on the first and second floors and office oriented uses on the third and fourth floors of the building.
4. Although buildings along the Main Street corridor are encouraged to have a zero front yard setback, in some cases, a front yard setback may be permitted if the building is located near a major intersection. The setback area shall not be used for vehicular parking, but shall be developed as public open space, including public art, benches, bicycle parking, recycling and garbage receptacles, and any interpretive displays.
5. Consideration may be given to preparation of a Downtown Urban Design Plan that will consider business retention and expansion, parking, traffic circulation, sidewalk widths, architectural character, beautification and landscaping, and to foster the vibrancy of downtown Whitehorse as a healthy and vibrant place.
6. Maintain a strong sense of community by locating essential services and commercial opportunities in the downtown.

9.4 Downtown Riverfront

The riverfront is a significant natural amenity of the downtown that has the potential to become the heart and soul of Whitehorse. It includes the area from the SS Klondike and Rotary Park in the south to Kishwoot Island and Quartz Road in the north (future site of Shipyards Park). The Downtown Riverfront Plan (1998) established broad land use policies for the downtown riverfront area that are described below. These policies will be used as a guide to the implementation of other development initiatives. The Downtown Riverfront Plan was followed by the Riverfront Design Concept (2000), which outlined five activity nodes, each with distinctive features and characteristics. Principle activity nodes include Shipyards Park, the Visitor Reception Area and Rotary Peace Park.

The downtown riverfront is designated as Mixed Use – Riverfront, and is expected to be implemented through design and construction of new facilities over the next 5 to 10 years. Map 9 reflects the land use designations in the Downtown Riverfront Plan whereas policies from the Downtown Riverfront Plan are described below.

Policies

1. Land designated as Mixed Use – Riverfront may include a mix of multi-family residential, retail, restaurants, tourist accommodation, marine activities, parks and open space. Specific activity nodes are identified:
    a. Shipyards Park – a multi-use park area, and festival space;
    b. Visitor Reception Area – visitor information activities linked to the Yukon River with an outdoor plaza; and
    c. Rotary Peace Park – family oriented park facilities
2. Public and private sector initiatives within the Mixed Use – Riverfront designation shall focus on enhancing the historic experience of the riverfront and developing the link between people and places of activity within the downtown.

Riverfront Walkway, Downtown Whitehorse

9.4.1 Policies – Riverfront Walkway

The riverfront walkway area represents that portion of the downtown Yukon River corridor paralleling the westerly riverbank and extending a minimum of 30 metres inland. The following policies apply:

1. A contiguous public walkway route shall be provided along the riverfront within 30 metres of the riverbank to link all activity nodes within the Mixed Use – Riverfront designation. All buildings are prohibited between the walkway and the river, except for those catering to marine activities, public use and those mainly of a seasonal nature.
2. Major new buildings (those with a "footprint" exceeding 65m^2) are to be discouraged from locating within the 30 metre setback zone. Museum expansion, as well as relocated and existing heritage structures, is exempted from this policy.
3. In conjunction with the above, a 30 metre building setback shall be observed for major new buildings along the riverfront area. This setback may be modified on the basis of detailed design and where building space is designed to accommodate public activity and does not interfere with the walkway link.
4. Public access to the riverfront walkway shall be provided at three key focal points:
    a. in the vicinity of Ogilvie Street, in proximity to the river;
    b. at a downtown node in the vicinity of Main Street and the MacBride Museum; and
    c. in the vicinity of the Yukon Visitor Reception Centre.
5. Within the riverfront walkway corridor, permanent buildings shall be small scale, have a small footprint, and will preferably be of a heritage nature, which may incorporate commercial usage.

6. To respect the heritage quality of the riverfront walkway, preservation and restoration of several important heritage features may include:

    a. the White Pass crew quarters north of the Reception Centre;

    b. retention of the old fire hall building in its current location;

    c. retention of the White Pass and Yukon Route depot in its current location at the foot of Main Street;

    d. recognition of the location (e.g. interpretive signage) and perhaps restoration of some of the riverboat "butterboards" along the river which were used to haul the sternwheelers from the river; and

    e. restoration and perhaps relocation within the riverfront corridor of some of the historic squatter buildings occupying riverfront lands.

7. Provision may be made for one more significant riverfront area structure. Suggested is a public wharf roughly extending along the river from Main Street to the MacBride Museum. This wharf may incorporate permanent structures, which reintroduce some of the historic warehousing, office (and perhaps new retail features) to recall the past warehousing and freight function of the river wharf in this area.

8. In consideration of wharf design, adequate engineering attention is to be given to river bed foundations, erosion, fisheries, and ice conditions. Given these constraints, construction of a wharf structure cantilevered from the shoreline or built immediately adjacent to the riverbank may represent a preferred option. Removal of existing piles from the riverbank may disturb soils in this area and contribute to sloughage.

9. Riverfront view areas shall be developed and constructed at strategic locations along the downtown riverfront. Where practical, such view areas should include interpretive signage exploring the past role of the river in context to First Nation activities and settlement, as well as the role of the river in Yukon transportation particularly during the gold rush era.

10. A well marked and safe downtown view point for motorists may be developed on the escarpment along Wickstrom Road on the east side of the Yukon River. An approximate location is shown on Map 9.

11. In developing permanent or seasonal buildings within the river corridor area, particular consideration is to be given to establishing activity nodes which act as focal points for public interest. This may include clusters of heritage buildings, interpretive features, and seasonal food service and retail kiosks augmenting year-round facilities.

12. It is proposed that the historic fire hall situated south of the White Pass depot be retained at its current site, and adapted to a general interpretive or retail festive space in order to generate year round public activity in this area and to complement the adjacent White Pass depot.

13. Boat launch facilities are proposed to be upgraded at the north portion of Rotary Peace Park, by developing improved access from the Visitor Reception building area.

9.4.2 Policies – Community, Park and Open Space

There has been an expression of interest from residents in maintaining a significant amount of land in public park and open space. Appropriate areas for open space and leisure activities are illustrated in the policies below.

1. The principal area of public recreation space is to be maintained north of Ogilvie between 2nd Avenue and the Yukon River. Retention of this area as park space provides an attractive entrance to the riverfront area from Second Avenue and blocks any extension of the commercial strip east of Second Avenue.
2. The proposed Shipyards Park shall incorporate opportunities for both passive recreation (i.e. nature trails, picnic areas, interpretive kiosks) and active all-season recreation.
3. The areas indicated on Map 9 as Institutional is to be reserved for public meetings, convention, arts, culture and administrative facilities. Buildings in this area may be situated along the riverfront, provided public areas along the river remain unimpeded. Where public buildings extend to the riverfront walkway, every effort shall be made to incorporate as part of the building design, public viewing space over the waterfront. Construction in this area is preferably limited to several smaller buildings, rather than one large building.
4. Public and institutional buildings may have one access point to Second Avenue, but are proposed to have their primary access to the suggested extension off Black Street.
5. Potential establishment of a downtown riverfront wharf or similar docking facility shall be considered as an opportunity to develop commercial visitor oriented boat tours of the river and to provide a link to the east bank of the river at a scenic spot. The intent is to allow for a small passenger ferry to take visitors and residents from the downtown across to the other side of the river for day use activities, such as hiking, picnicking, bird watching, etc.
6. In the downtown area around the White Pass Depot, opportunities exist to focus interpretive efforts on the waterside of the railway station. Such features as the former wharf pilings, the First Nation spirit houses on the east side of the river, and the former village site now occupied by the hospital are visible. This would be an excellent site, developed in cooperation with First Nation representatives, to interpret the history of the area.

9.4.3 Policies – Commercial

In order to facilitate year round activity and bearing in mind climatic conditions, the Plan provides for additional retail and tourist accommodation uses near the Riverfront. These commercial opportunities are designed to also take advantage of both riverfront views and of the proximity of the area to established retail facilities in the downtown core of Whitehorse as well as the Qwanlin Mall. Commercial activities are designed to also take advantage of ready access and exposure to Second Avenue, a major arterial in the city.

1. The current commercial land use pattern along the west side of First Avenue is to be largely retained, with favourable consideration to be given to either total commercial use or mixed commercial use, allowing residential activity above a main floor retail area.
2. Commercial use of the White Pass depot building is encouraged, but is to be devoted primarily to activities which provide maximum opportunities for public access, such as food and beverage service rather than office use.
3. A general retail area is proposed east of Second Avenue between Ogilvie Street and the Black Street alignment. While some auto oriented retailing along Second Avenue is acceptable, strong encouragement is to be given to development of several building clusters with retail access primarily from Second Avenue serving both residential and commercial land uses and allow for pedestrian links. Building clusters with pedestrian links, plazas and landscape features are preferred over traditional strip commercial development and shopping centres.

9.4.4 Policies – Residential

Proposed residential uses along the downtown riverfront are very limited. However, there is an advantage in re-establishing at least part of the traditional residential focus in the area. This residential area has the advantage of providing for riverfront views for most potential housing units, contributes to the revitalization of the downtown core, permits year round use of the riverfront areas, and offers access to adjacent park and recreation space as well as commercial and public use buildings. The following policies apply.

1. The proposed residential area is designed to allow for lower profile residential units to comprise of primarily semi-detached units.
2. The height limitation for housing in Mixed Use – Riverfront shall be 2 storeys.
3. A building setback from the river shall be maintained that retains full use of the riverfront walkway while accommodating river views from home sites.

4. No parking or storage areas shall face the riverfront area, with the area between residential buildings and the riverfront walkway to be landscaped.

5. Care shall be taken to ensure adequate screening and an attractive appearance of residential buildings facing the street.

6. In utilizing the historic White Pass & Yukon Railway tracks within the downtown core, the Whitehorse Waterfront Trolley may be extended from Schwatka Lake in the south to Marwell Industrial Park in the north.

9.4.5 Policies – Roads and Utilities

In order to achieve the land use proposals of the Plan, several changes will be required to road patterns and utilities. Key aspects are noted in the polices below.

1. It is proposed that First Avenue be designed to encourage a more pedestrian friendly environment. It will be critical to enhance the pedestrian quality of the riverfront area, and to allow for the extension of several public buildings/uses along the riverfront. Traffic calming between Steele Street and Wood Street, through reducing the paved road width to allow for potential expansion of the MacBride Museum, including enhanced museum display opportunities, is recommended.

2. First Avenue is to be connected north to Black Street. This also facilitates access to the Downtown Riverfront Lands. Sidewalk improvements are required to Black Street to provide better connections to Second and Fourth Avenues.

3. Parking areas along First Avenue may be retained but are to be redeveloped in strict accord with design guidelines, which reinforce earlier City efforts to provide for more attractive landscaped parking along this road. Consideration is also to be given to both temporary RV/Camper parking and to short term parking for tour buses.

Map 7 – Downtown Pedestrian Network

Map 8 – Cycling Network

Map 9 – Downtown Riverfront Plan

Chapter 10

Institutional and Public Lands

This chapter provides background and policies pertaining to public and semi-public land uses. Public land uses refer to the use of land by a government or administrative body intended primarily to serve the day-to-day needs of residents. Examples include educational facilities, medical clinics and hospitals, public airports, correctional institutes, and social services. Semi-public land uses means the use of land by a religious organization, club, lodge, society or association intended to serve the needs of the population. This includes churches, day-care facilities, meetings halls and clubs.

Council Strategic Plan

"The roles of our Territorial and First Nations Governments and non-governmental organizations are in harmony and clearly defined. We advocate for community volunteerism, for strong non-governmental organizations and for the development of individual self-reliance."

10.1 Whitehorse International Airport

The Whitehorse International Airport plays a key role in the social and economic life of both Whitehorse and the Yukon Territory. The Whitehorse airport is the "gateway" to the Yukon for national and international air travel. It also serves as a regional hub for air traffic within the Territory, Alaska, northern British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. In 1996, the airport was transferred from Transport Canada to the Yukon Territorial Government, and this was followed by a development plan entitled "Vision 2020" (1999).

The Airport Development Plan examines the requirements of the Whitehorse International Airport catchment area in light of changing economic conditions in the Yukon, periodic airport congestion/delays, and a desire to plan for orderly development of the airport. As a result, the development plan recommends a major expansion of the Air Terminal Building and main apron along with related improvements to access roads, parking lots, public amenities, retail concessions, airside infrastructure, and security systems. The Airport Development Plan also proposes an airside commercial land component.

In addition to the Airport Development Plan, Airport Zoning Regulations have been established by Transport Canada to control building heights and other obstacles that may compromise the safety of aircraft. If the airport zoning regulations are violated, the airport can lose its certification to land scheduled air carriers.

Policies

1. The City shall work with the Yukon Government to ensure that development plans for the airport are compatible with surrounding land uses, and to ensure that development plans for the area surrounding the airport are compatible with airport operations.
2. Light industrial activity that relates to the aviation industry, and accessory commercial uses are encouraged in accordance with the 2000 International Airport Development Plan – Vision 2020.
3. There shall be no airport related development within 30 metres from the top of the escarpment adjacent to the airport. The only exception within the setback is the provision of a perimeter trail.

Whitehorse International Airport

10.2 Public Service Designation

The Public Service designation provides for land allocated to public and institutional facilities that service the entire community of Whitehorse such as the Whitehorse International Airport, Yukon College, Yukon Archives, Yukon Arts Centre, Takhini Arena, Whitehorse General Hospital, and the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

Policies

1. Major institutional and significant public facilities intended to serve the entire community shall be confined to lands designated as Public Service. Land

designated as Public Service includes post-secondary educational facilities, regional hospitals, correctional institutes, and public airport facilities. Accessory commercial uses to the principle public service use, such as retail and restaurants, shall be permitted as an ancillary use.

10.3 Community Services

Residential designations such as Residential – Country, Residential – Urban, and Residential – Downtown allow public uses such as schools, and semi-public uses, including churches, community halls and medical facilities. Thus, no exclusive land use designation is required to permit such uses, however, some special provisions are defined in the policies below.

Policies

1. The location of future religious facilities or community halls shall respect the pattern of the neighbourhoods.
2. The location of elementary schools shall avoid major collector routes to ensure safe pedestrian routes for school children. Wherever possible, access shall not require pedestrians to cross major arterial roadways.
3. The location of secondary schools shall be on or near major collector roads given the traffic volumes generated by such facilities.
4. As new areas are considered for development, proper consideration is to be given to educational facilities. Major new residential areas shall be planned in cooperation with the Department of Education. Principal future growth areas such as Lower Porter Creek and Beyond Copper Ridge will be given special attention.
5. The location of neighbourhood parks adjacent to educational facilities is strongly encouraged.
6. The City shall review the location of the existing fire station downtown and in Takhini in conjunction with fire fighting needs and the pattern and direction of the City's development trends.
7. The City shall require the provision of barrier-free access to all facilities intended for public use. Accessibility shall be reviewed for all subdivision and infrastructure projects.

Chapter 11
Infrastructure

The City's infrastructure network includes the road system, water supply and distribution system, sanitary sewer and storm sewer services, and a solid waste landfill facility. The City's infrastructure has been studied and recorded in several different reports over the past decade. All developed portions of the city have electrical, telephone and cable services, except for squatter settlements such as McLean Lake. The city does not have any gas heating services.

OCP Vision

Consider the long-term impacts of all land use decisions. Build a community that works both for today and future generations. Ensure that short-term decisions do not compromise long-term intent. Make sure that services and amenities are close to home.

Council Strategic Plan

"Our water, sewer, roadway and communication networks service our population in an environmentally sound and safe manner. Our water source remains pure."

11.1 Transportation

The City's existing major roadway network was classified in 1987. The Alaska Highway acts as the main through roadway providing access to all sections of the City. Arterial roads, including 2nd Avenue, 4th Avenue, Two Mile Hill, Robert Service Way, Mountain View Drive and Hamilton Boulevard, provide access to the Highway and connect the principal areas of traffic generation. Collector and local residential roads make up the remaining road network. There are over 220 kilometres of roads for vehicular traffic in the city and more than half (56%) of these roads are paved. Map 10 illustrates the road network for the City. A comprehensive city-wide traffic network study was last undertaken in 1992, and will be updated by the end of 2002.

Almost three-quarters of all people who commute drive to their place of work. Only 3% of employed residents take transit. The City transit system expanded service between 1997 and January 1999, but this was not met with an increase in ridership.

Policies

1. Land uses in the City shall be provided with adequate and safe access commensurate with the level of traffic generated. The 1992 Traffic Study shall be updated to identify new road improvements and to reflect changes in land uses.
2. The interface between City roads and Territorial Highways shall be properly coordinated to avoid unnecessary encroachments and the erosion of the highway's primary function as a major thoroughfare.

3. Residential properties adjacent to the Alaska and North Klondike Highway shall have a vegetated buffer along the highway right-of-way. The depth of the buffer may be established through local zoning.

4. Controls for development along the Alaska Highway shall be established as follows:

    a. development along the Alaska Highway shall be concentrated in nodes that are designated for commercial, residential, industrial, recreation, or institutional uses;

    b. a vegetated buffer shall be maintained along both sides of the Alaska Highway, except in nodal areas of development; and

    c. consideration shall be given to the development of either service roads or secondary access roads within nodal areas along the Alaska Highway to improve access and safety.

5. In order to determine the future needs of existing and future commercial uses along the Alaska Highway, and to define this further in relation to local access, landscape and signage issues, consideration may be given to preparation of an updated Alaska Highway land use corridor plan.

6. The intersections of Robert Service Way and Two Mile Hill with the Alaska Highway are recognized as the gateways to the downtown, and as such shall continue to be developed and landscaped to reflect the pride and beauty of the City of Whitehorse.

7. There is one river crossing, the Robert Campbell Bridge, which services Riverdale and the Whitehorse General Hospital, with the rest of Whitehorse. The City shall investigate the most feasible way of increasing traffic flow across the river and providing secondary emergency access which may include:

    a. widening the Robert Campbell Bridge to accommodate a single reversible traffic lane for peak directional flow;

    b. providing a 2nd bridge crossing of the Yukon River, or

    c. twinning the Robert Campbell Bridge.

8. In order to accommodate future residential growth in the Beyond Copper Ridge area, construction and/or upgrading of Hamilton Boulevard, Range Road, Robert Service Way, and portions of the Alaska Highway shall be considered to accommodate improved traffic flow, and allow secondary access to the various neighbourhoods in Copper Ridge.

9. Public transit service shall provide a level of service, which meets the needs of local residents while at the same time recognizing financial limitations.

10. To support bicycling and other non-mechanized modes of transport as alternative transportation methods within and between the downtown and residential areas, the development and integration of continuous and safe cycling infrastructure into existing and proposed road improvements may be considered.

11. A parking study may be conducted in order to identify both the need and the most appropriate location for a downtown parking facility. This study may include a series of options and the final building shall be designed to fit within the context of downtown buildings. A parking facility may be multi-use and include commercial operations on the exterior of the building.

12. To support safe pedestrian movement within the downtown and principal residential neighbourhoods, sidewalks shall be provided along public right-of-ways in association with new development. This includes wheelchair accessible curb letdowns at major intersections.

13. The City of Whitehorse shall work with the Yukon Government to evaluate the feasibility of a new rest area site near the intersection of the Alaska and North Klondike Highway and compare against the viability of expanding the existing site. The purpose of this would be to upgrade the existing rest area into a regional orientation site that serves north, west and southbound travellers.

14. New highway signage should be kept to a minimum and be concentrated within or near the existing rest areas on the Alaska Highway. All signs are subject to approvals from either the City of Whitehorse or the Yukon Government.

Alaska and North Klondike Highway Intersection

11.2 Water System

The water system for the City of Whitehorse is a complex multi-pressure zone system consisting of five distinct metered service areas. The five areas are Riverdale, Valleyview, Porter Creek, Hillcrest expansion, and Copper Ridge. The City of Whitehorse obtains its water from groundwater sources via a system of wells and a lake source at Schwatka Lake. A number of pressure-boosting and pressure-reducing stations as well as storage reservoirs regulate the pressure in the various supply zones. Map 11 indicates the location of the various wells, reservoirs and pressure boosting stations.

Policies

1. The protection of Schwatka Lake and the surrounding watershed is of paramount importance. The City shall preserve, protect and enhance water supply areas by keeping recharge areas free from incompatible development and sources of contamination.
2. Water quality is monitored on a regular basis and the impact of future upstream development shall be assessed. If water quality fails to meet the Federal drinking water guidelines, then the water supply may require additional treatment, or a secondary water source may need to be identified. A Water Protection Action Plan may be prepared to consider alternative water supplies if Schwatka Lake cannot be used due to contamination.
3. As the population increases, upgrading of the warm water supply system may be required. This would involve either expansion of the warm water wells or installation of a water heating system.
4. A detailed hydrological and hydrogeological assessment of the McLean Lake watershed shall be undertaken prior to any further gravel extraction. This study should explain how the watershed works, identifying the primary water source points, main run-off and infiltration characteristics and implications of water flow on the ecology of the watercourse. The impacts of possible gravel extraction, storm water run-off and sewage septic and/or water well usage should be discussed.
5. The City shall carefully review any recreational and other development proposals that may be made in locations above the City's water intake, in order that the quality of drinking water is not impaired.
6. Care must be taken to control the impact on water quality, vegetation and erosion in the upstream watershed. These areas play a vital role in maintaining the overall integrity of the ecosystem. Any proposed development projects within such watersheds shall receive careful evaluation with respect to the impact on storm water run off and quality.

11.3 Sanitary and Storm Sewer System

Generally all urban development is serviced via a system of gravity sewers and lift stations (four major, five minor). There are two independent systems, which are serviced by the Livingston Trail sewage lagoons and the Crestview lagoon. The lagoons are located adjacent to the Yukon River. Approximately 98% of the city's sewage is treated at the Livingston Trail sewage lagoons. The Porter Creek sewer system is discontinued whereas the Old Whitehorse sewage lagoon is only used for emergency purposes. The rural areas rely on on-site sewer services, or pumping. Map 11 indicates the location of the various lift stations and treatment facilities.

The City's storm sewer system is made up of a series of independent systems, which drains into local streams or wetlands, and eventually drains into the Yukon River.

Policies

1. All new lots in areas designated as Residential – Country shall have their soils tested in advance of proposed development to determine the adequacy of soils for sewage percolation, and potential for conflict with ground water resources.
2. Areas designated as Residential - Urban shall be expected to have connections to the City's sanitary sewer system.
3. The construction of a storm drainage plan for all new development and/or subdivision proposals shall be required before improvements or pavement of streets or parking lots, and as needed for all new subdivisions and other development.

Copper Ridge Pumphouse

11.4 Solid Waste Management

In 2000, the City collected 2,026 tonnes of residential waste, while 15,343 tonnes were disposed in the landfill. Solid waste is disposed of at the City of Whitehorse landfill, which is located west of the Alaska Highway and south of the Kulan industrial area. If there is no change to the current waste

generation, the landfill will have a life span of approximately 25 years. The City has added a buffer of land surrounding the landfill facilities.

The City owns land surrounding the existing and future landfill operations providing a minimum 450-metre buffer from residential lands. The City is working on the clean-up of the existing waste oil pit. Tipping fees at the landfill have been implemented to increase awareness of landfilling costs and to provide a mechanism for charging differential fees for materials, based on disposal costs. The City is also completing a solid waste action plan with the goal of achieving a 50% diversion of waste from the landfill.

Waste reduction initiatives continue to be examined and implemented where feasible, as outlined in the Solid Waste Action Plan. Residents receiving curb side collection have experienced a reduction in the number of bags/cans allowed for weekly pick-up. Alternate week collection of garbage and compostable materials was implemented in the spring of 2002 after several years of testing the program and consulting with residents. Other organizations and governmental levels have had a positive impact on the rate of recycling. Public education, market research and the diversion of household hazardous waste through annual collections are other services currently offered outside of the municipal government. Territorial regulations concerning waste oil and solid waste management have been developed and tire regulations are proposed. The City is preparing a Solid Waste Management Plan in accordance with the Solid Waste Regulations.

Policies

1. The City shall work towards waste diversion programs and legislation to meet national targets, following the hierarchy of reduce, reuse, and recycle. Programs shall be sector and material specific, and shall take into account diversion potential, environmental risk avoidance, greenhouse gas reductions and feasibility.
2. The City shall continue to work in partnership with other levels of government and diversion organizations to develop legislation and municipal bylaws that seek to augment recycling through product stewardship programs, expansion of waste watch to city wide residents, differential tipping fees or banned substances from the landfill.
3. The City encourages the recycling of glass, aluminium, paper and other materials, which can be economically reused, through a diversion credit for materials collected for recycling and exported to recycling plants.

4. The City will examine the waste stream from municipal buildings and seek ways of reducing waste, including discouraging the use of non-biodegradable plastic packaging materials when adequate substitutes are available.

5. The City supports and encourages businesses and institutions to set-up and maintain a waste diversion program.

11.5 Technology Infrastructure

In order to stay competitive, and to attract new residents, the City of Whitehorse needs to be connected to its citizens, businesses and to other levels of government. This will be accomplished by working with these groups on initiatives to jointly implement Condominium Fibre and shared Wireless Communications Infrastructure. These joint initiatives will involve the planning and implementing of fibre optics and wireless communications to further evolve this technology in the City of Whitehorse.

Policies

1. The City of Whitehorse is developing a strategic plan to identify opportunities for growth and use of technology. As a result of this strategic plan, the City may participate in partnerships with other agencies and levels of government. The City shall also pursue funding avenues with the Territorial and Federal Governments to ensure participations in communications technology.

11.6 Public Utilities Designation

The purpose of the Public Utilities designation is to allow for major public utilities such as sewage treatment lagoons and water intake facilities. They should be located away from other land uses and environmentally sensitive areas.

Policies

1. Areas designated as Public Utilities shall be used to accommodate landfills, sewage lagoons, and water intake facilities.

2. Public utility corridors are permitted in any land use designation, subject to any environmental regulations and bylaws.

3. The remediation of soil, water and other media may be permitted in areas designated Public Utilities. This use shall be compatible with other Municipal, Territorial and Federal regulatory requirements in relation to approvals and licensing, including applicable impact and environmental assessment requirements.

4. A new location for the CBC tower should be investigated since its current location is within Lower Porter Creek and is slated for residential development.

Map 10 – Road Network

Map 11 – Existing Water and Sewer System

Part III

Implementation

Chapter 12
Development Phasing

An overall phasing plan for future development has been prepared to provide direction over long-term growth. The basis of the phasing is to maximize the use of existing utilities so that significant infrastructure investment is delayed as long as possible, without compromising growth of the city. The objective of this is to minimize costs to the City and its residents. Factors that influenced development-phasing considerations include:

- capacity of existing infrastructure
- cost of new infrastructure to accommodate new developments or link them to existing infrastructure costs, that would likely have to be carried by the City
- proximity to the Livingston Trail or Crestview Sewage Lagoons
- topography, and the associated ability to maximize gravity services for sewage and stormwater collection
- access to transportation network

While phasing can be considered from a purely technical perspective, consideration also needs to be given to maintaining competition and choice in the market place, which may favour development in several sectors of the city. The phasing plan is thus intended as a broad guide, which upon more detailed review and cost analysis can direct new development.

Table 7 identifies an overall sequence of residential development. Actual costs of development within the phases will vary, depending on the distance development occurs from existing services, capacity available within existing services, as well as the amount of development that can be supported before any major upgrade is required. Detailed development proposals will need to

consider the capacity of the existing systems in relation to the development proposed.

Table 7
Residential Development Phases

Area	Phase #	Comment/Issues
Lower Porter Creek	2	• a concept study was completed for this area in 1994, determining that 290 hectares of land is available for development which could accommodate up to 2400 new residential units • sewer and water services would have to be extended; the nearest water and sewer services are located in the Porter Creek community, approximately 1.5 kilometres to the west along Range Road
Porter Creek Extension	1	• sewer and water services can be extended from Porter Creek along Mountain View
Takhini/Range Road	1	• an ADS shall be prepared that examines the potential for housing redevelopment, and for possible improvements to the Northland and Takhini Mobile Home Parks
White Pass Tank Farm	1	• to be considered for residential and commercial purposes after it is determined that soils are safe, and any hazardous waste has been removed • water and sewer services to be extended from Valleyview
Beyond Copper Ridge	3	• a concept study was completed for this area in 1999, which concluded that the area can generally support up to 2000 residential units • water and sewer services to be extended along Hamilton Boulevard
Whitehorse Copper	1	• an ADS was completed for this area in 1999, which proposes a wide mix of future land uses, including country residential, highway and service commercial, service and heavy industrial, and environmental reserves • water and sewer services are to be provided on-site

Map 12 – Residential Phasing Plan

Chapter 13

Future Studies, Regulations and Bylaws

The OCP is a broad statement of goals, directions and policies guiding change as it occurs in the City. It will be implemented in a number of ways, through a hierarchy of legal and policy tools, and by the commitment of City Council and the residents of Whitehorse to ensure that the vision remains alive and relevant. City Council will use the OCP as a general reference in its annual budgetary process, its decisions about programs and capital expenditures, and its support for proposed land developments.

As a broad statement of direction, the OCP provides the statutory authority for the more detailed and site specific zoning and subdivision bylaws, development permit system, and other policy instruments designed to ensure that development is appropriate and meets public expectations. These tools provide guidance on siting, building massing, permitted land uses and activities, the character and form of development, and a myriad of other details, which ensure the highest quality of development.

Listed below is a series of implementation strategies that should be adhered to in order to achieve the goals, objectives and policies stated in this Plan.

Implementation Strategies

1. Consider innovative changes to zoning when improvements to the liveability of the community are demonstrated. This may include zoning amendments, which entail prezoning lands to a higher density, introducing policies that anticipate rezonings under certain conditions, reviewing rezonings on a case by case basis, or a mix of these approaches as determined by Council. Zones that permit residential land uses should be updated to promote affordable housing suitable for families and seniors.

2. Regularly monitor the implementation of the Official Community Plan. In order to gauge the success of the Official Community Plan, a regular evaluation process shall be undertaken. This may include establishing a list of measurable indicators, for consideration by Council, upon which OCP goals and objectives will be reviewed. Based on the level of success in meeting OCP goals and objectives, Council may wish to amend policies, consider new implementation strategies and, when needed, conduct a comprehensive OCP review.
3. Conduct a review of all City bylaws to determine consistency with the Official Community Plan.
4. Foster mutually beneficial partnerships amongst stakeholders in order to make efficient use of resources and strengthen community ties.

In addition to regulations and bylaws to implement the OCP, a number of policies offer specific recommendations for future actions. Several of these relate to added work that may need to be undertaken by the City, other governments or private/public agencies to further define the scope of actions pertaining to specific geographic areas of the City. Other recommendations reinforce the need for further study to provide background and data to allow for more targeted implementation actions.

Listed below is an overview of the supplemental actions necessary to achieve implementation of the OCP. Once completed, these studies, plans and bylaws will form the basis for policies that Council will consider for future inclusion in the OCP. This list should be envisaged as an overview of the more significant implementation actions, and is not intended as an exhaustive reference to all actions required.

- *Update Zoning Bylaw:* Complete a thorough review of the current Zoning Bylaw to ensure that policy actions and recommendations can be achieved.

- *Gravel Supply*: Negotiate with the Yukon Territorial Government in order for the City to develop and manage a future gravel resource extraction site, or transfer an existing site for the City to manage.

- *Schwatka Lake*: Prepare a detailed management plan in order to ensure the safety of recreation and commercial users, and the on-going protection of the water quality of Schwatka Lake.

- *Parks and Recreation Master Plan*: Review and update the current Parks and Recreation Master Plan (1994) to ensure that policies are relevant and reflect changing priorities, needs and demands in the community.

- *Chadburn Lake/Grey Mountain*: Prepare a comprehensive new management plan for the entire Chadburn Lake Park and Grey Mountain area, which should emphasize the protection of the watershed and the integrity of natural and heritage features.

- *Takhini/Range Road Area Development Scheme*: Prepare an ADS that includes a review of housing conditions, the Airport's Noise Exposure Forecast contours, and examine the potential for housing redevelopment, and for possible improvements to the Northland and Takhini Mobile Home Parks.

- *White Pass Tank Farm Direct Control District*: Area is designated as a Direct Control District, pursuant to Section 291 of the Municipal Act. To be developed primarily as a residential neighbourhood.

- *Infill Housing*: Consider a program of promoting infill housing in suitable areas to be phased-in over a long-term period. Public involvement and support will be necessary for such a program to be successful.

- *Industrial Strategy*: A comprehensive industrial strategy, complete with a market analysis, may be conducted in order to fully understand the development potential and requirements of industrial lands within the city limits, particularly, in relation to the overall proportion of land to be provided with utility services.

- *Downtown Urban Design Plan:* Consideration for such a plan that will consider business retention and expansion, parking, traffic circulation, sidewalk widths, architectural character, beautification and landscaping, and to foster the vibrancy of downtown Whitehorse as a healthy and vibrant place.

- *Fire Station:* Review the location of the existing fire station downtown and in Takhini, in conjunction with fire fighting needs and the pattern and direction of overall City development.

- *Traffic Study:* The current Traffic Study (1992) should be updated to identify new road improvements and to reflect changes in land uses.

- *Alaska Highway Land Use Corridor Plan:* Consideration may be given to preparation of an updated Alaska Highway Land Use Corridor Plan in order to determine the future needs of existing and future commercial uses

along the Alaska Highway, and to define this further in relation to local access, landscape and signage issues.

- *2nd River Crossing:* A feasibility study, indicating cost estimates, may be considered in order to investigate the potential for either widening the Robert Campbell Bridge, twinning the Robert Campbell Bridge, or providing a second river crossing.

- *Water Protection Action Plan:* This Plan would consider alternative water supplies if Schwatka Lake cannot be used due to contamination of the water supply.

- *Official Community Plan Review:* An Official Community Plan review committee may be established to regularly review and monitor the Plan to ensure relevancy, and to reflect changing times. In addition, regular liaison with the residents of Whitehorse is essential during an Official Community Plan review. Additional public consultation shall be required during a community plan review, augmenting Public Hearing requirements outlined in the Municipal Act.

Map 13 – Area Land Use Designations

Map 14 – Downtown Area Land Use Designations